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GREEN scene

THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

SEPT/OCT. 1999 • \$5.00



Fall Bulbs, Spring Flowers

Rock Garden Wonders • In Search of Faeries
Dangerous Seeds? • New: The Potting Shed

C O N T E N T S

4. The Potting Shed

8. The Little Folk

Victoria Mowrer Lashley dares us to believe in faeries, who some say have inhabited our gardens since the beginning of time. She also offers a fascinating history of the faerie fad, highlighted by its peak in Victorian England.

14. A Layered Look

Art Wolk brings us up to speed on the trend of layering bulbs. Learn how to put in the right plants at the right time to create an incredible spring effect. If bulb planting is on your autumn schedule, this article will inspire your creativity to no end.

8



20. Bulb Art

Bulb expert Becky Heath helps reinvent our notions of spring-garden design and gives us a wealth of new planting schemes for the fall bulb planter. Dig it.

26. Bio-Tech Comes to the Garden

Pamela Vu unveils the secret world of genetically engineered crops and seeds, many of which are coming to a supermarket shelf near you. Do you know what you're eating? This revealing piece will help you find out.

30. Rock of Ages

New Jersey's fabled rock garden—Watnong Nursery—is back and better than ever, says Ruby Weinberg. In this story, she tells us how a non-gardening couple took it over when the previous owners passed away and then began wondrous renovations to the famous garden. There are also plenty of useful new tips for beginning and expert rock gardeners alike.

33. Plant Societies Invite

34. Classified Ads

COVER PHOTO

A perfect combination of *Tulipa saxatilis* 'Lilac Wonder' and *Muscari armeniacum* 'Heavenly Blue.' Photo by Art Wolk



GREENscene

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If there's anything that conveys the grace and wonder of growing older, it's the September garden. Some flower gardens revel in a youthful flash of spring bulbs, while others hit their prime a month or so later with peonies, roses, and poppies galore. The mid-summer garden glows under the spell of lilies, daisies, and coneflowers, before all but the bravest flower gardeners retreat to their vegetable plots for the dreaded scorch of August.

The September garden, however, can be your finest horti-

The Grand Finale

cultural hour; a moment when late-blooming perennials and various annuals you cut back a month earlier return for a final, glorious blast of color. In my case, after months of feeble excuses ("Would you believe it? That darn woodchuck ate all my mums!"), shaky disclaimers ("...oh, you should have really visited *last week*"), or just shamelessly blaming any and all weathermen, I can look at my September garden and finally say, "It's looking pretty good right now—will you come for a visit?"

The stars of my September garden are asters, heleniums, chrysanthemums, sedums, helianthus, boltonias, impatiens, and zinnias. Just when you thought the August heat would decimate the zinnias, they become fully animated in late summer, especially if you keep deadheading them as you go. There are also many, many asters that thrive in this region, but I go with the obvious one, the New England aster, *Aster novae-angliae* 'Alma Potschke.' Its blazing, electric-magenta color is virtually unrivaled at this time of year and, at 4 feet in height, it's a real standout in our zone. We should all grow asters for this very reason.

Finally, for toughness and color combined, the large, drought-resistant *Helenium* genus—lamentably saddled with the common name "sneezeweed"—sports colors from yellow to dark orange-red. I'm fond of 'Brilliant,' a deep-orange perennial whose spherical center is covered with bright yel-

Letter From the Editor

low anthers. It's a marvel in the late-summer garden and looks positively extraterrestrial through the lens of a camera. [See photo].

As you thumb through this edition of *Green Scene* (while sitting in your radiant September garden, one hopes), you can read about a gardening labor-of-love that's perhaps looming in your future—planting spring bulbs. Between Labor Day and Thanksgiving, thousands of you will grab a trowel or bulb planter and spend many an hour on your knees planting tulips, crocuses, daffodils, muscari, hyacinth, and more spring gems. Yes, as the patina of the September garden begins to fade, it will soon be time to start thinking about spring.

This past March, I visited Brent & Becky's Bulbs, the home and mail-order headquarters for Brent and Becky Heath. In their vast Gloucester, Virginia test gardens, the couple gave us a tour of daffodils by the thousand, all blooming in one immense field by their house. Brent even demonstrated his special bulb-planting technique. With the energy of a 20-year-old, he knelt down and began quick, assembly-line motions, one hand jabbing the earth open with a trowel and the other popping in a bulb or two. He noted that, when working in this fashion with Becky, the twosome can plant several *thousand* bulbs a day. Granted, if I tried to plant that many bulbs with my achy back, I'd probably be in traction by the end of the day, but his agility was still an inspiration.

Once the tour was over, I immediately asked Becky about crafting a story for *Green Scene* and she graciously consented. In this issue, Becky writes about her garden, which is solely devoted to bulb design.

One of her goals is to offer an alternative to the notion of "naturalizing," whereby you throw a handful of bulbs on the ground and plant them where they land. Instead, she has devised many

new design patterns that will make your spring garden "a wower."

In a related article, Art Wolk touches on the hot topic of "layering" spring bulbs and plants. To his mind, why stick with one boring level of flowers when you can have two stories of floral color, shape, and texture? Using the hints in this article, you can use bulbs to paint the layered spring garden of your dreams.

Finally, in this issue, you'll also notice our new "Potting Shed" section, where we'll offer even more stories, tips, and news, albeit in capsule form. As you well know, when it comes to gardening info, there's *never* too much of a good thing.



So enjoy the season. Fall is fast coming upon us, yet it's the perfect time to be outside, enjoying your garden's grand finale and formulating plans for next year. As for me, I'll be out strolling amidst the 'Alma Potschke' asters, mentally plotting where to put next spring's bulbs and, more likely, thinking of ways to avoid straining my back while planting them. Yes, the autumn-bulb planter faces a colorful mix of pleasures and obstacles, especially if you're a lumbar-challenged gardener like me.

Pete Prown
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The Potting Shed

photos by Joanne Kostecky



A Dash of Arizona...in Allentown

While driving home from work in Allentown, Raymond Foreback passes acres of deciduous forest, cleared fields of corn and wheat, and the vast reaches of urban sprawl. But what Raymond and his wife Carolyn really love is the lifestyle and climate of the Southwest. Not surprisingly, when they recently decided to build a new home, they wanted to combine the xeriscapes of Arizona and New Mexico with eastern Pennsylvania's Zone 6 climate.

With a thorough landscape plan, local plants were cleverly sited throughout the Foreback's property to evoke this Southwest spirit. The use of cactus climatically suited to this area topped a list of other desert-like plants: yucca, ginkgo, scrubby "bushes" created by lavender and coreopsis, low-growing *Stachys*, and a winter display of dry flowers and assorted grasses. Each year, spring bursts into bloom with hundreds of daffodils, much like a desert after a rainstorm.

The front-entry garden was graced with a seating area of wet-laid glazed brick, while pottery that echoed Native American craftsmanship was added to heighten the effect. In the rear garden, a space was designed featuring an evocative totem pole and a two-level entertaining area with an overhead trellis for twining vines.

With everything in place, the Forebacks can now walk around their Allentown yard at dusk and imagine themselves in a lovely desert garden near Santa Fe or Tucson.

A margarita, anyone?

—Kirk R. Brown

Kirk R. Brown is the business manager for Joanne Kostecky Garden Design. Ms. Kostecky is the award-winning designer and photographer for her landscape company in Allentown, PA.



GARDEN NET

WORLD'S OLDEST FLOWER?

The Associated Press recently reported that scientists have discovered what they believe to be the world's oldest flower, dating back 142 million years. The plant was found in a rock formation in the **Chinese village of Beipiao**, about 250 miles northeast of Beijing. According to their report, "It is a spindly twig with peapod-shaped fruit, and a woody stem."

David Dilcher, a University of Florida biology professor, adds, "It doesn't have any beautiful or showy flowers, but it is a flowering plant because it has fruits that enclose seeds. It would have been a very different world if early flowering plants like this one had not been successful. There would have been no apples, no Wheaties in the morning, no corn on the cob, no potatoes, and no rice or other grains."

EXCITING WEB SITE! If you have access to the Internet, love gardens, and live in the Philadelphia/Wilmington region, this is one web site you won't want to miss:

www.libertynet.org/gardens. It is the product of the Gardens Collaborative, an association of 25 gardens in our area. At this site, you can get information and directions to popular spots like Longwood, Historic Bartram's Garden, and the Morris Arboretum, as well as newer spots like Chanticleer, Awbury Arboretum, Welkinweir, and more.

TOP SHRUB WINS AGAIN.

In 1998, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society gave the bottlebrush buckeye (*Aesculus parviflora*) its coveted **Gold Medal Plant Award**, which honors little known and under-used woody plants. Now, following suit, the **Garden Club of America** has given this native its 1999 Freeman Medal.

Cottage Garden Glory

"The essence of a cottage garden, as it has come down to us through the ages, is a bountiful yet regulated informality. It has evolved through common sense, combines need with enjoyment, and is entirely unpretentious."

So begin Christopher Lloyd and Richard Bird in their enchanting new book, *The Cottage Garden* (DK Publishing, \$13.95). Like a midsummer cottage garden, this softcover title is over-

flowing from beginning to end with rich text and hundreds of gorgeous color photographs. Along the way, you'll pick up countless tips on the proper plants, techniques, garden features, and recipes of the consummate cottage gardener. Indeed, if you've ever felt burnt-out by all your outdoor labors, this is a book that will make you fall in love with gardening all over again.

—Pete Prown



Garden Tips: September

- Now is the time to select and plant spring-blooming bulbs, available at area garden centers or by catalog. When planting bulbs, large platter-size holes can be dug to place many bulbs in at once for a clustered effect (6-8 inches average depth, depending on size of bulb). Or they can be planted singularly, to give a more scattered or sparse appearance.

- Thin out spring- and midsummer-blooming perennials with more than two or three flower clusters. Dividing them now will enable the new clusters to enlarge for next year. This is the time when perennials put their energy into root production for more robust plant growth next season.


- Make notes on how well your garden performed this season. A dry season could reveal those plants that are drought hardy or drought intolerant. These notes will help in planning garden varieties for the following season. It's a great idea to have a variety of plants that are hardy in drought, as well as in wet conditions. Draw a diagram of plant locations, so you'll know where to look for bright green shoots in the spring.

- If you are thinking of forcing bulbs, plant them in containers now for next

year's enjoyment. Set bulb pans out in a cold frame, or heel them in and cover them with leaves. When bulbs begin to emerge above the surface of the pan, they can be brought into the house for forcing. (If refrigerator space is available, store bulb pans in the refrigerator until they start to emerge from the soil and then bring them out to force.)

- You can now purchase perennials at bargain prices. Root-bound containers of perennials can be purchased and divided, because garden centers often have sales on summer plants to make room for fall bloomers. For this same reason, fall is also a great time to shop for containers and garden ornaments.

—Eva Monheim



The shrub is a low-maintenance specimen whose large-white summer flowers are set against a bold leaf texture. Growing to 12-feet high with a 15-foot span, the buckeye prefers partial shade and acid soil. It's deer resistant, too, making it a highly suitable shrub for mid-Atlantic gardens.

REISSUES FOR READERS.

Mariner Books has just reissued *The Essential Earthman*, a landmark collection of essays by Washington Post gardening editor, **Henry Mitchell**. The late journalist's wit and deep horticultural knowledge pervade each chapter and will provide a wonderful read for the coming months of fall and winter.

Also being reissued are *Laughter on the Stairs* and *Sunlight on the Lawn*, the second and third installments of the *Merry Hall* trilogy by famed garden scribe, **Beverly Nichols**. If you like humor—no, make that sinfully delicious sarcasm—mixed with your horticultural literature, then these superb Timber Press books should fit your fancy. Highly recommended.

ACADEMIC FARMING. **Wilson College**, the all-women's college in Chambersburg, PA, has recently announced a unique program for feeding its students. Using a \$30,000 grant from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Wilson intends to grow its own food for students and buy crops from local farmers. The college also plans to raise its own livestock for meat. Wilson and HSUS want to encourage and preserve local, sustainable agriculture, and their goal is to eventually provide 30% of the food consumed at the college (currently, they only produce 1%). We wish them the best of luck in their endeavors.



The Gardener's Bookshelf

Wild Orchids Across North America

by Philip E. Keenan (Timber Press, 321pp, hardcover, \$39.95)

Level: All levels
Pros: Beautiful photographs and helpful diagrams; quick reading
Cons: None

After reading Philip Keenan's book, you may never view botany in the same light. The author takes the reader on his travels throughout North America, teaching all the way. He not only discusses each orchid habitat, but also describes the sights and sounds of the woods they grow in. To keep readers on their toes, he talks about his personal experiences, including helpful information for outdoor survival. Keenan's encounter with a black bear in Alaska, for example, adds to an exciting dimension of the book and also reminds us that, sometimes, plants worth viewing are not always in the most accessible areas.

Visually, Keenan's superb photography is done with a sensitive eye for detail. Perhaps that is why this book is not like those old, dry textbooks that only deal with nomenclature and botanical structures. Indeed, if you are a new orchid enthusiast, this book may get you hooked for life. The author shares his knowledge on botany and zoology in a subtle manner—which is really the way things should be taught—and he succeeds in sharing his entire appreciation of the environment.

—Eva Monheim

Natural Stonescapes

by Richard L. Dubé, APLD & Frederick C. Campbell (Taunton, 183pp, softcover, \$24.95)

Level: All levels
Pros: A fine "how-to" on adding rocks to the garden
Cons: So-so illustrations

For some of us, a garden just isn't a garden unless it has a dramatic rock feature. Certainly, when you add just the right stone or two, one's garden is suddenly tied into the larger landscape in an indelible way (something Japanese "Zen" gardeners have known about for centuries).

To that end, *Natural Stonescapes* seems a solid resource for gardeners and homeowners who want to add rocks to their home landscape. From small groupings to large-scale cliff formations (such as for a waterfall into a pond), this book covers the bases thoroughly, including useful topics as choosing the site, how to lay out aesthetically pleasing arrangements, and how to move huge boulders with the proper tools or even a Bobcat loader.

The accompanying color photos and pencil drawings are good, but not outstanding; then again, this wasn't meant to be a coffee-table book. It's a practical "idea book" for the homeowner or garden designer and succeeds in that light. If you want to create a garden that's out of the ordinary, *Natural Stonescapes* makes sure your projects don't leave you between a rock and a hard place.

—Pete Prown



Night Gardening

by E. L. Swann (Hyperion, 215pp, hardcover, \$16.95)

Level: All levels
Pros: A garden tale that appeals to the intellect and heart
Cons: The tale had to come to an end

There is fiction you read to pass the time, while lying on the beach or as a distraction from the mundane morning commute. And then there are books like E.L. Swann's *Night Gardening*, that stirs your imagination, awakens your senses, and renews your hope in love and humanity, leaving you with lingering thoughts to savor.

Swann skillfully weaves a simple tale of 60-something love between Maggie and Tristan. She, a 61-year-old stroke victim and widow of an alcoholic, is left to pick up the pieces of her fractured life. He, a New Hampshire import and top-notch landscaper, is hired by

Maggie's affluent neighbors to transform their Cambridge, Massachusetts' estate into a multi-dollar wonderland. Together, they cultivate their shared passion for horticulture into a new found love for one another.

Working only in the night, the two (garden) lovers slowly bring Maggie's neglected beds to life. Swann describes this with arresting beauty and tenderness, as well as the Zen-like transcendence that can come with total immersion in horticulture. As the garden is nourished back to health, Maggie too regains her vitality and exuberance for life.

Although the romantic plot steers away from the maudlin, I'm afraid that men may dismiss it as another tear-jerker. But regardless of gender, this simplistic tale ably conveys the spiritual dimension of gardening, which anyone can appreciate. Retreat to your favorite place and find out for yourself.

—Pamela Vu

Wooden Fences

by George Nash (Taunton, 240pp, softcover, \$22.95)

Level: All levels

Pros: Easy and inspiring, with very readable instructions on construction

Cons: Projects require elaborate planning, labor, and a considerable financial investment

"It's the line we draw to separate 'mine' from 'not mine,' and 'this' from 'that.' Whether the message is 'keep out' or 'do come in'... 'move along' or 'tarry a while,' a fence, by its very nature, cannot help but be significant."

George Nash expertly and eloquently writes about the historical significance and styling of America's most common landscape feature, the wooden fence.

Photographer James P. Blair also provides much inspira-



tion through his color photos, demonstrating the functions, designs, and visual possibilities of wooden fencing. Later chapters skillfully instruct on every possible aspect of construction, such as suggesting materials, advising on long-term care, laying fence lines, digging anchor posts, hanging a gate, and putting on finishing details. In addition, the book wisely discusses zoning laws and offers sage advice for working with neighbors. If you don't have a wooden fence, after reading this book you'll most likely want one and, clearly, this is the perfect guide to have on hand for the job.

—Erin Fournier

AHS Great Plant Guide

(DK Publishing, Inc., 573pp, softcover, \$16.95)

Level: Intermediate to advanced

Pros: Good background information and graphics; handy pocket guide

Cons: Several editing errors where information is incomplete or missing

As a horticulturist, I find this book from the American Horticultural Society to be an excellent resource for general backgrounds on over 2,000 plants, all with photographs. Pictures are clear, and the handy guide and key make it easy to follow. If you know Latin plant names, this is an excellent plant guide, but definitely not for beginners, although the general information at the beginning of the book is detailed enough for any gardener. This section includes: *Shopping for Good Plants*, *Choosing the Right Plants*, *Choosing a Healthy Plant*, *Preparing the Soil*, and *Understanding Plant Names*. All of these subjects are important in the decision-making process for your garden.

This is also a great book to take with you when you are shopping for perennials. Information tags may be on the containers, but this book will give more information than the plant tag has to offer.

AHS Great Plant Guide could be made more appealing to a larger audience if there was a cross-reference of common plant names. There are several areas where editing falls short of perfect. There is one page where the text tails off with no continuation and there are several areas that are inconsistent in editing style.

The unique feature of this handy guide is the key for plant temperature ranges.

The guide shows the extremes that the plants can tolerate. I have never seen this detail in a guidebook before, which makes it more universally appealing. With a few tweaks, this book could be the perfect portable guide.

—EM

Classic Garden Structures

by Jan and Michael Gertley (Taunton, 183pp, softcover, \$19.95)

Level: All levels

Pros: Thorough guide to several garden-construction projects

Cons: No designs for arches or pergolas

Handy with a hammer and power saw? If so, this book may interest you. *Classic Garden Structures* guides you through 18 construction projects, including designs for a tomato trellis, strawberry tower, raised bed, cold frame, potting bench, obelisk, and even a complete greenhouse. Each project is laid out with concise, step-by-step prose and plenty of diagrams, supply lists, and measurements. I especially like the first chapter on "Tools and Supplies" that will help beginner-to-intermediate-level woodworkers get a handle on projects to come.

As far as criticisms, it would have been useful if the authors had ratings for each project on its level of difficulty, so beginners wouldn't inadvertently attempt a complicated project, such as building one's own greenhouse. I also wish they had included plans for an arch and pergola, two rather obvious garden projects. But overall, I was pleased with the approach, information, and clean graphic layout of *Classic Garden Structures*. You never know: it might bring out the Bob Vila in you.

—PP



"Midsummer Eve," by E.R. Hughes, c. 1900, watercolor with gouache on paper mounted on board. This painting follows the traditional style of faerie painting, but anticipates the next development in faerie art, the enormously popular "flower painting" era. This, however, created a large body of work deemed trite by the public and it eventually destroyed the genre.





In the Faerie Land

A Tale of
Garden Myth,
Mirth, and Magic

by Victoria Mowrer Lashley



Remember Peter Pan's famous appeal: "Do you believe in faeries? Then clap your hands!" W.B. Yeats would have clapped. So would William Blake, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and many other great thinkers and artists of all varieties. Have you ever seen a faerie in your garden or nearby woods? Better still, would you like to?

An Enchanted History

Tales of the wee folk—elves, sprites, and all the kindred spirits of flower, field and forest—predate written documents. Even though reports of faerie sightings are few and far between these days, the tales of the *fae* or "faerie tales" have persisted in our own heritage and remain quite intriguing. How many stories can you recall with a faerie or goblin in it? Just think for a moment: *The Tales of King Arthur*, *The Troll Under the Bridge*, *The Lady of the Lake*, or *Rumpelstiltskin*. One notable faerie character, the leprechaun, is essential to a St. Patrick's Day celebration—a favorite holiday for thousands of people, Irish or not. Faerie appeal, it seems, is no more bound by cultural barriers than it is by physical ones.

The realm of faeries and elves is divided into four groups: the earth spirits (elves,

gnomes, and trolls); the water spirits (nymphs, undines, and water sprites); the air spirits (sylphs); and the fire spirits (salamanders). The European faerie seems to have originated in Italy, where they were known as *fatae*. With the expansion of the Roman empire of 2,000 years ago, the *fatae* were introduced through storytelling to other countries. In France, *fatae* was corrupted to *fee*. The Brits anglicized it to *fays*, which the country folk eventually changed to *faerie* (now also spelled "fairy" or "faery").

Although most of the information today about faeries reflects a European tradition, the idea of nature spirits dwelling invisibly amongst humans is universal. Native Americans of the Cherokee tribe, for example, know them as *nunnehi*, which translates into "moon-eyed people."

"The Chase of the White Mice" by John Anster Fitzgerald, 1864, oil on canvas. A dark, mesmerizing image that reveals the undercurrent of cruelty that exists in many faerie paintings. The dazzling colors and jewel-like detail distract from the thorny weapons wielded by the faeries to goad the mice.



Faerie Art

"I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows, Where ox lips and the nodding violet grows; Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine, With sweet musk roses, and with eglantine: There sleeps Titania, sometime of the night, Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight, And there the snake throws her enamel'd skin, Weed wide enough to wrap a faerie in."

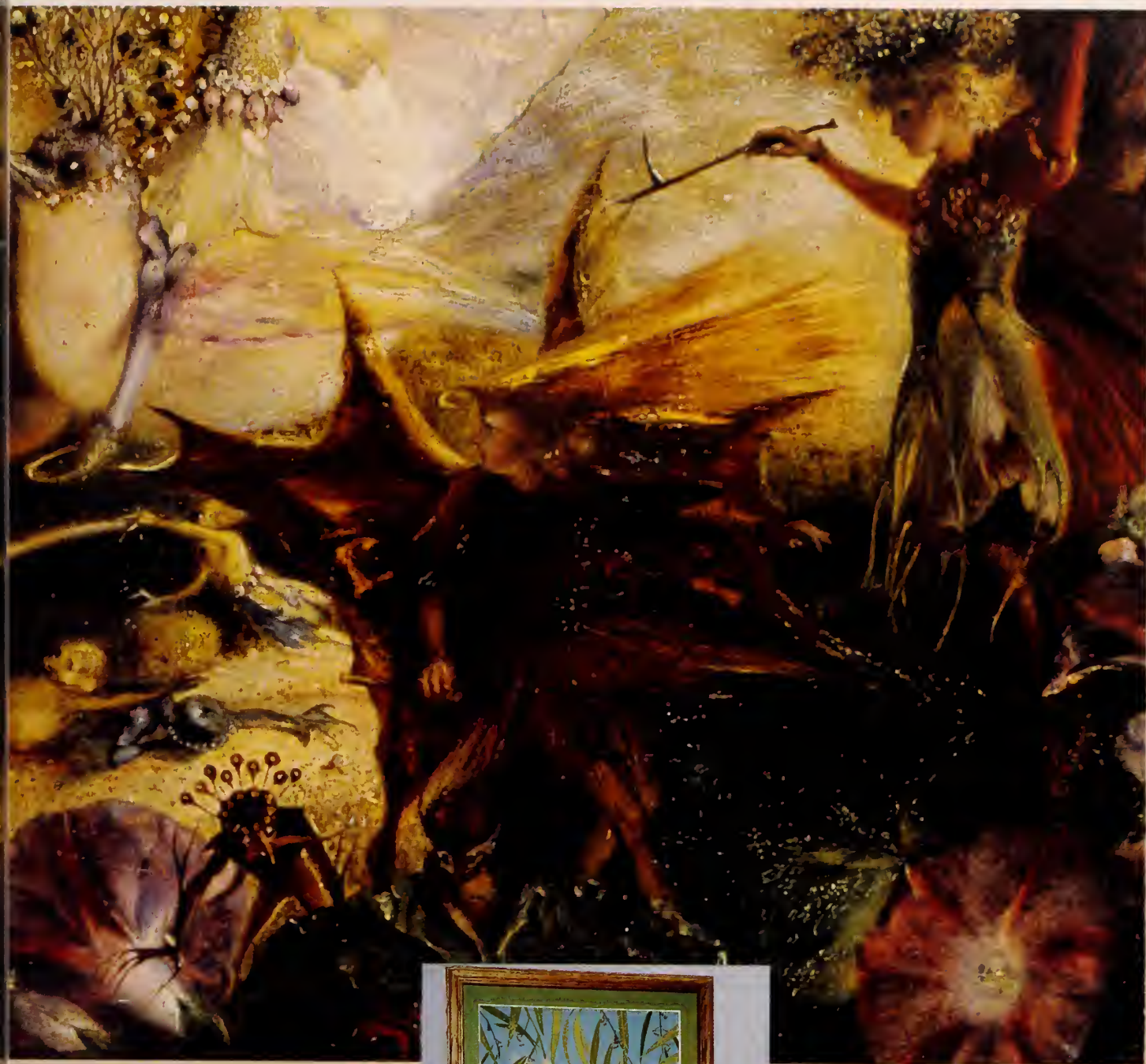
(William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act II, Scene 1)

The Elizabethan audience for whom this was written for was quite familiar with the faerie realm and would not have doubted that such a world could mirror our own. Interest in faeries has waxed and waned since the Victorian era when obsession with the natural world, including faeries, reached its zenith.

Today, however, there is a resurgence that cannot be denied. A visit to a recent exhibit of faerie painting also supports the current revival. Entitled "Victorian Faerie Painting," this exhibit traveled to

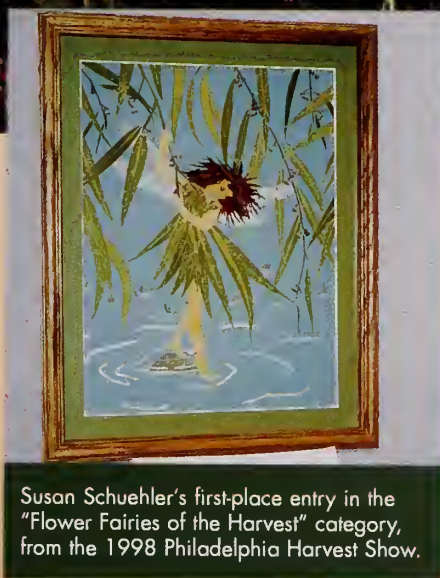
several locations worldwide, including the esteemed Frick Collection in New York, where it was a huge success. The world of the faerie, as perceived by Victorian oil painters, was revealed in all its magnificent detail.

A more local "faerie exhibition" was held at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's 1998 Philadelphia Harvest Show. The theme for the Pressed Flower competition was "Harvest Faeries." Many delightful entries depicted faeries as seen or imagined by their creators. The winners of this class were



Susan Schuehler, Eugene Burkhart, Marcia Evans, and Hedy Sirico, but unlike the work of the Victorian painters at the Frick, the Harvest Show entries were collaborations with nature, using real flowers, leaves, and plant-derived pigments.

Faeries and faerie land have been represented by the film industry since the days of *Peter Pan*. The recent flurry of film activity in the area includes *The Borrowers*, *Labyrinth*, and, recently, *Fairy Tale: A True Story*, starring such heavyweights as Harvey Keitel as Harry



Susan Schuehler's first-place entry in the "Flower Fairies of the Harvest" category, from the 1998 Philadelphia Harvest Show.

Houdini and Peter O'Toole as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes adventures. This film brings to life the intriguing story of the Cottingley faerie photographs taken in a Yorkshire garden between 1917 and 1920. Two little girls, Frances Griffiths and her cousin Elsie Wright, claimed to have seen faeries by "the beck" (i.e., a stream near their house) in Cottingley, a village near Bradford in West Yorkshire, England. To prove their claim, they borrowed a Midge quarter-plate camera from Elsie's father and proceeded to photograph the



A Tale of the Tulip

According to English folklore, tulips were once used as cradles for faerie children. A tale from Devon tells of a woman who grew lots of tulips in her garden because she once went out at night and saw the faerie babes sleeping in them. After she died, the man who moved into her cottage dug up all the tulips because he thought they were useless, and instead planted vegetables and parsley. This so enraged the faeries that every night they would dance on the vegetables, tear their roots out of the ground, and shred the parsley leaves. Only on the woman's grave were the tulips still big and beautiful and fragrant. In time, though, the grave was forgotten, the tulips were trampled, and the faeries withdrew far away. Since then, says the legend, tulips have lost their size and splendor.

photo by Pete Prown

"The recognition of faeries' existence will jolt the material twentieth century out of its heavy ruts in the mud, and will make it admit that there is a glamour and a mystery to life."

—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



"The Faun and the Fairies" by Daniel Maclise, 1834, oil on board. This painting's outer border is formed by a double rainbow, which is "magically significant." Barn in Cork, Ireland. Maclise (1806-1870) was a lifelong friend of Charles Dickens and a member of the Royal Academy.

from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Essex

sprites they swore they saw. But we don't want to give away what happens, so see the film—it's a charmer for all ages.

Faeries Amidst the Flowers

The fact that these films and the Frick exhibit were conceived at this point in time in history and were well received by their modern audiences makes perfect sense. The Victorians were drawn to the world of the faerie for several reasons, not least of which was a feeling of separation from nature brought on by industrialization. Perhaps we too are feeling that same sense of separation from nature at a deep, subconscious level. Perhaps our modern equivalent is the byproduct of another period of rapidly advancing technology, in our

case, computers and the Internet.

As for horticulture, it is more likely that more gardeners believe in, or even *see*, faeries than non-gardening folk. If they do not exactly believe, they have little difficulty imagining the possibility and that is what is important: *imagination*. Our imaginations are most active during childhood. In many ways, gardeners are also quite childlike. They are typically held in awe at the glory of gardening and its gifts. Indeed, colors, smells, textures, and sounds enrapture them. They are able to imagine impossible gardens as they sit by the January fire thumbing through stacks of catalogs, and then proceed to order many more seeds and plants than they possibly have time to sow and reap. Put this together with the fact that faeries reside everywhere there are gardens, trees, or woods, and the chances of an adult gardener having an encounter with a faerie becomes quite likely.

If you are so inclined to attract faeries to your garden, it is important that it be an environment that welcomes all living beings. Put up birdhouses, birdbaths and feeders, and bat houses. Plant flowers for hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies. Fountains, waterfalls, and fishponds are favorite places for faeries to dwell—they adore floating on waterlily pads. They would be most appreciative of a “wild space,” too. It need not be a large space, as they are not very big. Whatever you do to bring life to your garden will bring faeries as well. They will be pleased by your efforts and, if you keep your eyes, ears and mind open, you will be aware of their presence. Now, please, clap your hands! ❖

Victoria Mowrer Lashley is a regular contributor to *Green Scene*.



A Few Faerie Plants

Cowslips: Beloved by the faeries, since they aid in finding faerie gold.

Foxglove: Their florets are worn as hats and gloves.

Ragwort: The faeries' horse.

Clover: Four-leafed ones can break a faerie spell.

Oak: When an oak stump sends up shoots, Oakmen are born. (Oakmen are guardian faeries of the forest who live in oak trees. All the trees and beasts of the woods fall under their protection.)

Pansies: A faerie love potion.

Primroses: Makes the invisible visible.

Bluebells: Fields of bluebells are interwoven with faerie spells.

St. John's Wort: Used by faeries as a healing herb.



Seduction...

Pure and

Layering Bulbs For S

by Art Wolk

You've lived through another dreary winter of desiccating winds that have sucked the color right out of the landscape. But one foggy but mild morning, you're out for an early morning walk, and up ahead you see a bit of color in an otherwise drab environment. Without thinking, you're pulled towards it by unseen arms that hold you as sensuously as a lover's embrace. The closer you get, the tighter the garden's grasp, until your senses can barely withstand the delights of this April flower border. Make no mistake: The garden may be



Simple

Springtime Allure

a temptress, but every gardener is willingly seduced. All it takes is enough flower color and we all succumb.

That admitted, why not create your own object of springtime seduction in your garden? And, while you're at it, why not go all the way and really lay on the color? This doesn't mean just planting single layers of flowering bulbs. Instead, create a double layer of color to produce a knockout springtime flower garden. All it takes is a little planning and you can become the seducer as well as the seduced.

There are no hard-and-fast rules to layered flower gardens. Here, forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica* 'Early Bird Blue') make up the upper layer when combined with grape hyacinths (*Muscari armeniacum* 'Heavenly Blue').

all photos by Art Walk

The Early Layered Garden

The most sumptuous layered spring flower gardens are produced every year at Longwood Gardens. Fortunately, their horticultural artisans have been very forthcoming in sharing their techniques, which are described here. Just follow these simple steps to produce your own glorious garden of layered color.

If you decide to aim towards a layered garden in mid-April, when early tulips and mid-season daffodils are in bloom, there are two good choices for "ground-floor" color. The very best bulb for the lower level is the grape hyacinth (*Muscari* sp.). It blooms in clusters of purple or white racemes that begin opening on the lower part of the bloom stem and work their way up, taking a month to complete their performance. This gives you a huge window-of-opportunity to combine them with upper-level flowers. The other bulb used at Longwood for ground-floor color in the early garden is the hyacinth (*Hyacinthus*). Although its flowers are not as long-lived as *Muscari*, it works well because it has such a large cluster of flowers.

When planning your layered garden, simplicity should be your byword. Always strive to have a uniform color within each level, otherwise you'll create nothing but confusion for the eye. In addition, you should have masses (also called "drifts") of color measuring at least 3 feet by 4 feet for best visual impact. Remember: drifts, not lines, are what's needed in these types of gardens.

If your bottom layer is white, as can be produced by *Muscari botryoides* 'Album,' then the top layer can be virtually any color. But if you use purple grape hyacinths (*Muscari armeniacum*), then give some thought to what color combination is the most pleasing to your eye. I like pink or any of the cooler colors with purple muscari, but abhor red or yellow. Ultimately the most important person to please is yourself, not a neighboring garden guru. Just be sure to do a bit of color planning, so things don't end up looking like clothes whipping around in your dryer. That won't seduce anyone, not even garden slugs!

Once you've obtained your bulbs, planting can begin. This is best accomplished by laying the bulbs on top of the soil in the exact location where they're to be buried. If you're planting

hyacinths for your lower level, then interplant them with tulips or daffodils, spacing the bulbs 4 to 6 inches apart and planting them approximately 6 inches deep.

Within each drift, the bulbs are alternated approximately 1:1, meaning that within each row, you plant, for example, a hyacinth, then a tulip, a hyacinth, then a tulip, and so on. At Longwood, I noticed that if they "erred," it was always on the side of having an excess of ground-floor bulbs, all to a good result. When you get to the second and succeeding rows, be sure to stagger your plantings. Otherwise, each type of bulb will be too linear, destroying the massed effect you desire.

If you're planting grape hyacinths for lower-layer color, lay these bulbs on the soil 2 to 3 inches apart. Then place your tulips or daffodils approximately 5 to 6 inches apart, and make space for them by removing the excess grape hyacinths. The *Muscari* are planted 3 inches deep.

The Late Layered Garden

If you decide to aim your layered garden for late April or early May, you have a lot more choices of ground-floor plants. You can still use grape hyacinths, catching them at the tail end of their bloom cycle. But there's also a host of biennials that can be used to comple-

ment the blooms on the "second floor." The plants used most at Longwood are pansies (*Viola x wittrockiana*), English daisies (*Bellis perennis*), and forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica*).

As for sowing your biennials, you have two choices:

1) You can either start them from seed in late July or early August and interplant them with bulbs from late September to early October.

2) You can also sow the seeds later, up until October, and winter the plants in cold frames or unheated greenhouses. In late winter or early spring, the plants that were started late are then transplanted into your flower bed, between the emerging bulb foliage. As it turns out, these types of biennials love the cool conditions in a wintertime cold frame or unheated greenhouse, and they become extremely large plants by March.

I start biennial seeds in Pro-Mix BX, which is a typical soil-free mix that has the right combination of water retention, air, and nutrients that are so important to infant plants. Seeds are sown densely in 6-inch by 8-inch containers and, after germination, they're transplanted into flats containing 24 "cells" or compartments. Once your biennial seedlings are in separate containers or cells, gradually get them acclimated to a full day of outdoor sunlight.

Planting Bulbs and Biennials

If you started your seeds early, by late September you'll have bulbs and plants galore. Now comes the consummation of all your efforts: marrying the two to create your most sensuous spring garden ever. What you're after is a tapestry of plants and bulbs. As with the all-bulb layered garden, the two should be combined in drifts at least 3 feet by 4 feet. Again, within each drift, the bulbs and plants are alternated 1:1. As described previously, successive rows are staggered.

The distance between the center of a plant and where the bulb is buried can vary from 6 inches to 10 inches, depending on the dimensions of the plant and bulb foliage. Daffodils, with their grass-like foliage, and some tulips, with narrow, upright leaves, can be

Harvest Show This Month!

Looking for some fall inspiration? Come to the 1999 Philadelphia Harvest Show, a must-visit annual event from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Running from September 17-19 at the Horticulture Center in Fairmount Park, the Harvest Show is fun both to attend and compete in. This year's theme is "Harvest Luau." PHS members will receive 1999 Harvest Show booklets through the mail, while non-members can contact us directly for further details.

For more information, call (215) 988-8800, fax (215) 988-8810, or email Flossie Narducci at fnarducc@pennbort.org.



Six months in the making and timed to perfection! These hyacinths (*Hyacinthus orientalis* 'Pink Pearl') and tulips (*Tulipa* 'Christmas Dream') made for an impeccable combination at Longwood Gardens in 1999.

A three-layered club sandwich of flowers! These pansies (*Viola x wittrockiana* 'Melody Purple and White') combine perfectly with two types of tulips (the white *Tulipa* 'Purissima' and the purple T. 'Pandion') to form this striking spring border.



interplanted with biennials at closer distances. Tulips with wider, more horizontal leaves need more space in a layered garden or they'll hide the ground-floor plants.

Above all else, make your drifts as large as possible. Remember: the best flower gardens are those with the simplest design. To help your biennials make it through the winter without suffering damage, apply a 3- to 6-inch layer of a loose mulch, like pine needles. The mulch stabilizes temperatures around the plants and prevents winter wind and sun from drying them out. As the weather becomes warmer in late winter, the mulch should gradually be removed.

If you've started your biennials late (see option #2 above), then transplanting into the garden can begin in March.

Way back in the fall when you planted your bulbs, you had to space them to allow sufficient room for the biennials to be transplanted from your cold frames. By now most of your biennials will already be in bloom. So once they're transplanted, your garden will have the look of spring. At this point, it's just a matter of waiting until the bulbs are in bloom to have the layered garden of your dreams.

Other Possibilities

With the great variety of bulbs and biennials in the plant kingdom, you aren't limited to the standard ground-floor and second-story plants. By expanding the "architectural" boundaries of your layered gardens, innovative combinations can be produced.

This year, Longwood had a layered border of forget-me-nots coming through a lower layer of grape hyacinths. Although diminutive, this layered garden had all the beauty of its larger cousins. And, while the forget-me-nots and grape hyacinth bedfellows pushed the layered garden to the extremes of the minuscule, the Longwood staff also flexed their creative muscles at the other end of the dimensional spectrum by combining daffodils and a smattering of *Fritillaria imperialis*. There, in late April, tall drifts of *Narcissus* 'Queen of Bicolors' were wedded with even taller *Fritillaria imperialis* 'Lutea Maxima', producing the perfect marriage of NBA-sized bulbs.

If you're really ready to push the hor-



Another whimsical combination at Longwood Gardens in 1999. A "ground floor" of daffodils (*Narcissus* 'Queen of Bicalars') and "second floor" of fritillarias (*Fritillaria imperialis* 'Luteo Moximo') show that the possibilities of layered gardens are only limited by your imagination.

Example of planting pattern where the bottom layer is *Muscari* (grape hyacinth) and the top layer is tulip or daffodil. Note the staggered rows.



T = top-layer bulbs B = bottom-layer grape hyacinths [Distance between bulbs is 2-3 inches, depending on which bulbs or biennials are used.]

horticultural envelope, why not take the next step by creating a triple-layered garden? These flower beds, which invariably leave visitors awestruck, can be produced by combining biennials with both medium and tall tulips. In 1995, Longwood produced one of their most breathtaking springtime gardens ever. The flower beds contained a triple layer of color using pansies (*Viola x wittrockiana* 'Melody Purple and White'), medium-sized white tulips (*Tulipa* 'Purissima'), and taller purple tulips (*T.* 'Pandion'). It was a horticultural delight that transfixed every visitor.

Give It A Try

All of these layered gardens are far less difficult to produce than they appear. It's just a matter of making the

commitment of time and resources. So this fall, when you're purchasing bulbs for next year's spring garden, go ahead and give layered flower gardens a try. With a bit of effort, it'll be the most seductive one you've ever produced. Just one bit of advice: Be very careful who you invite to see it or you might be sending the wrong message to your visitor! ❖

Art Wolk writes and lectures on a variety of garden topics and has also just won the Quill & Trowel Award from the Garden Writers Association of America for his March 1998 *Green Scene* article, "Planting the Seeds for Future Gardeners." He would like to thank the staff of Longwood Gardens for their assistance with this story, especially Elizabeth Sullivan and Michelle McCann.

Bulb Sources

- **John Scheepers, Inc.**
23 Tulip Drive
Bantam, CT 06750
(860) 567-0838
- **Dutch Gardens**
P.O. Box 200
Adelphia, NJ 07710-0200
(800) 818-3861
- **Van Engelen, Inc.**
23 Tulip Drive
Bantam, CT 06750
(860) 567-8734
- **Brent and Becky's Bulbs**
7463 Heath Trail
Gloucester, VA 23061
(877) 661-2852

Seed Sources

- **Stokes Seeds**
P.O. Box 548
Buffalo, NY 14240-0548
(800) 263-7233
- **Park Seed**
1 Parkton Ave.
Greenwood, SC 29647-0001
(800) 845-3369
- **Thompson & Morgan**
P.O. Box 1308
Jackson, NJ 08527-0308
(800) 274-7333



HIGH WATTAGE BULBS!

Text by Becky Heath

Photographs by Brent Heath

Perhaps the best part about owning and running our own bulb company is that my husband and I can spark people's interest in bulbs and help them garden more successfully. At our 10-acre farm/headquarters in eastern Virginia, I was allotted a 14-foot by 236-foot section to plan and plant as a "teaching garden," something I've wanted to do for a long time. It was not specifically designed to be aesthetically pleasing, but instead to generate as many ideas about bulb design as possible. I divided the area into 15 different, home-sized gardens, each with a different color scheme, planting technique, layout idea, and plant combination. Here are a few of the fresh bulb-planting ideas I discovered along the way, all of which you can use in your own home gardens.



Bright Ideas for Fall



The author and her dog, Babette, sitting in a rainbow of tulips and daffodils by their home.

Bulb Design and Planting

There are various color schemes and themes running throughout my teaching garden. I have one all-white garden; one with only pinks, purples, and whites; one with pink, white, and blue; a couple with all yellow; and others that have no color scheme at all. Most gardens are oval-shaped, a couple are like "knot gardens," and one is rectangular-shaped. Because each garden flows and angles right into the next one, it was a delight to gather our touring visitors around each bed and watch their eyes light up, clearly conjuring up ideas of their own.

The bed closest to our house, dubbed Garden #15, was designed to be an all-yellow garden, planted in mass. That means I wanted each bulb to bloom solidly and evenly all over that garden. I used a small piece of concrete reinforcing wire with 6-inch squares as a template to get the even planting that I envisioned. Because I wanted this garden to be filled to the brim with flowers, I used a large, tubular bulb planter and dug a hole about 9- to 10-inches deep, dropping one bulb each of *Tulipa* 'Daydream', *Narcissus* 'Flower Carpet' and *Narcissus* 'Stratosphere' into each hole, right on top of each other.

In the holes around the edges of this garden, I put a little soil on top of the three larger bulbs and drop in a *Muscari* (grape hyacinth) or *Chionodoxa* (glory of the snow) bulb to add a little blue color and something shorter to give the other "barefooted" bulbs some proverbial shoes and socks. *Narcissus* 'Flower Carpet' bloomed first, followed by *Narcissus* 'Stratosphere' and then by the tulip 'Daydream' but their blooms overlapped nicely. It was a mass of yellow and one of the first areas to bloom on our farm. This expanse of 55-mph color was a real eye-catcher, and it stayed in bloom almost all spring.

I planted Garden #1, which is located closest to our office, in a similar fashion using a pink-and-white theme with *Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty', the daffodils 'Accent' and 'Mary Gay Lirette', and *Leucojum aestivum* 'Gravetye Giant' (summer snowflake) with a smattering of *Muscari* and *Veronica peduncularis* 'Georgia Blue' for good measure. The softness of the colors in this garden drew lots of "Ooo's and Ah's" from our visitors. Since the bulbs were planted so close together and right on top of each other, we've taken great care to apply some extra daffodil fertilizer and bulb

booster in hopes these bulbs will continue to bloom happily for many years to come.

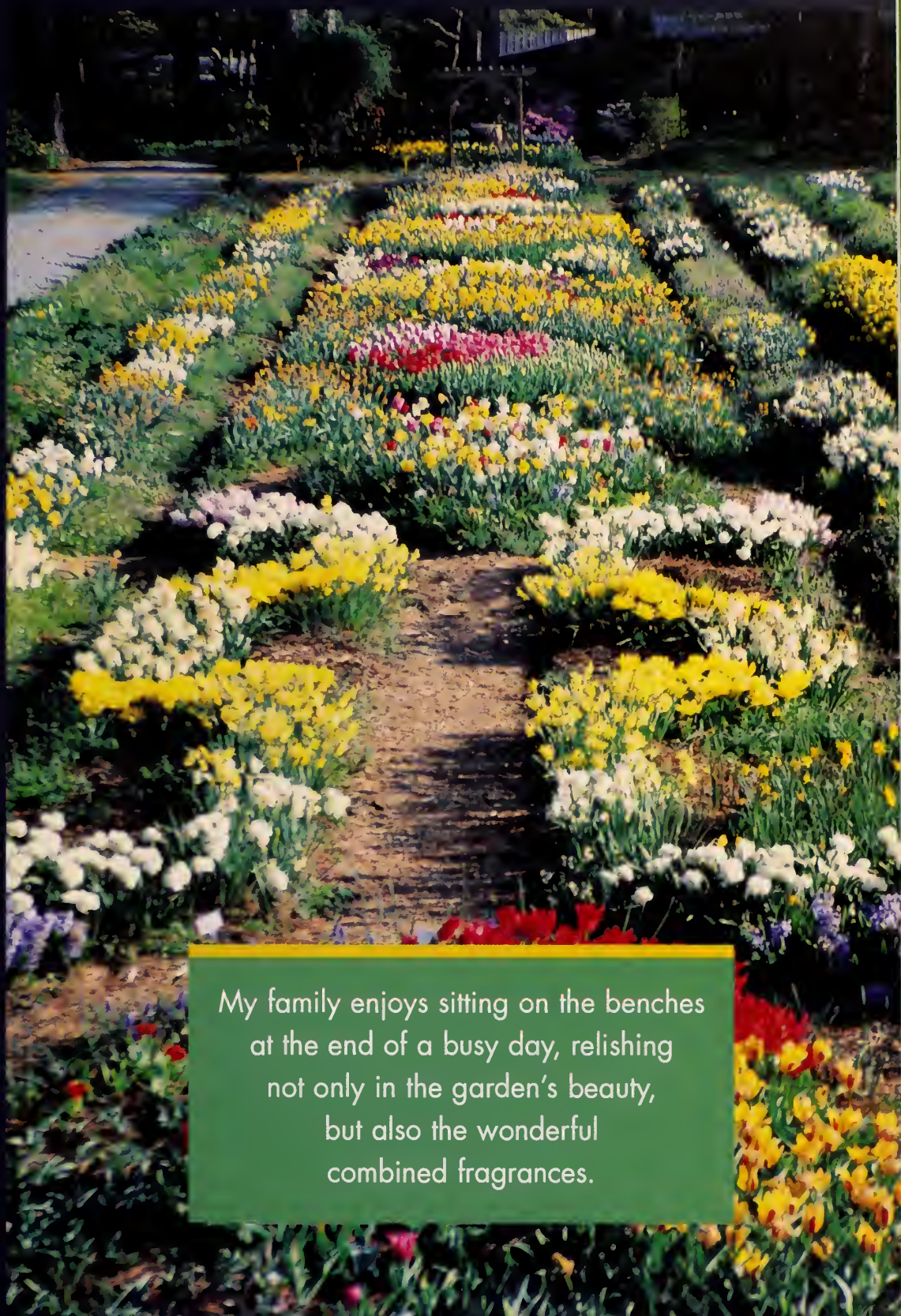
One idea that appeals to children of all ages is using plants to spell out words. We've seen many letters and words in front of numerous businesses, schools, and cities across the country. I decided to plant a large "H" in Garden #10, but I wanted it to be subtle, wish-

ing to see how quickly people would notice it. Again, I used mostly yellow daffodils, but created the "H" with the largest and darkest yellow (*Narcissus* 'Gigantic Star'), planting the area between the legs of the "H" with a smaller and slightly lighter-colored yellow (*N.* 'Pipit') and used an even shorter and lighter-colored yellow on the outsides (*N.* 'Jack Snipe'). Sometimes



Top: Using a wire form that is normally used in concrete work as a planting guide, the author digs holes in which she will plant bulbs of different type and size (you can also use metal fencing with large openings as a guide). **Bottom:** Brent planting tulips in a symmetrical pattern using bamboo poles as dividers. Levi the cat solemnly stands guard.

An overview of Becky's
teaching garden in
full spring splendor.



My family enjoys sitting on the benches
at the end of a busy day, relishing
not only in the garden's beauty,
but also the wonderful
combined fragrances.



The Heath's charming "H" garden, all decked out in varying hues of yellow.

visitors would spot it right away; other times, we'd have to ask if they saw a specific design in that garden. We had a lot of fun with this one and I plan to continue the "H" theme throughout the rest of the year with summer bulbs, perennials, and annuals.

Our second son, Duke, helped with my favorite, the Fragrance Garden. It is right in the center of the whole area (Garden #8), and is the only one with a straight path through it and two benches right in the middle facing each other. The area is filled with fragrant bulbs of all types in nice big clumps, and we thoroughly enjoyed sitting on the benches at the end of a busy day, relishing not only in the garden's beauty, but also the wonderful combined fragrances. All gardens are creations in progress, but that applies particularly to this garden. I will continue to add fragrant flowers and shrubs for the other seasons, plus we'll incorporate four small Myrobalan plum trees (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Atropurpurea') for added color, fragrance, and needed shade during our hot Virginia summer.

Brent did a great job with Garden #3, where I wanted large clumps of tulips in

What is a Bulb?

The term "bulb" is really a catchall for bulbs, corms, tubers, and rhizomes. In reality, they are all quite different in their structure.

CORMS, such as crocus and gladiolus, are swollen leaf stems that provide one season's growth before producing new "cormlets."

RHIZOMES are horizontally growing stems that creep below ground level, producing roots and aerial stems. Good examples are daylilies, lily of the valley, and bearded iris. **TUBERS** are swollen sections of stem, branch, or root used for storage—think of dahlias or cyclamen. Finally, **BULBS** are modified buds with fleshy scales or leaf bases, such as tulips, daffodils, and lilies.

—Erin Fournier

very even sections. He used long pieces of bamboo to divide the garden into five separate areas. With a different tulip planted in each section, it was an incredibly colorful sight. Each area was divided by a very straight invisible line, making it seem very rigid at first. However, we planted lots of *Muscari armeniacum* around the edge of this multi-color-schemed, geometric-shaped garden, softening the effect and tying it together. *Muscari* is one of those bulbs that works in almost every garden and it really did its job in this one.

Garden #7 was the biggest surprise of all. Many of our customers like mixtures and normally buy a mixture of daffodils or tulips. Because these mixtures have a tendency to bloom sporadically, they often don't have a lot of focal impact, so I decided to plant a mixture to show our visitors what *not* to do. We got carried away, however, and planted a real hodge podge, with many types of daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, fritillarias, crocus, and anemones. There was no particular design plan to this garden, but it was filled with an abundance of colors and fragrances, and stayed in bloom forever. Amazingly, it turned out to be one of our most popular gardens. I was the one who learned a lesson with this garden, so the laugh was on me.

It was great fun thinking up as many possible combinations as I could for my "teaching garden." It was made more beautiful with the addition of the great benches in the Fragrance Garden and the arbors at each entrance, made especially for me by my father, whom I adore. In all, there are endless plant possibilities for today's gardeners to experiment with and to help create almost any garden mood. The only real design "wrongs" are when plants are put in unsuitable situations, making them very unhappy and unhealthy. But as long as you love the look and the plants are happy and thriving, then that's all that matters, right? ❖

Becky and Brent Heath are the proprietors of Brent & Becky's Bulbs, a mail-order business in eastern Virginia. You can contact them or request a copy of their catalog at: 7463 Heath Trail, Gloucester, VA 23061 toll free (877) 661-2852, fax (804) 693-9436, www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com



BULB BANDITS

Plagued by bulb-eating critters in your garden? Well, fear not...here are a few precautions you can take to prevent those wily creatures like squirrels, rabbits, moles, voles, and deer from making lunch out of your latest bulb planting.

- First and foremost, use daffodils. Because of their unpleasant taste, critters will not touch them.
- Experts on the PHS hotline [215-988-8777, 9:30 am to noon, Monday-Friday] suggest you lay aluminum chickenwire on top of the planted area, using stakes or nails to hold it firmly in place. Make sure you extend the mesh at least 6 inches outside the planted area, as this will prevent especially ambitious rabbits and squirrels from burrowing to the bulbs. The flowers will grow neatly through the holes and you can cover it with a light mulch (1-2 inches). It will also deter deer, since they're afraid of getting their hooves stuck in the mesh.
- You may actually want to try feeding the squirrels during the fall and winter. The theory is that if the local squirrel population is offered easy-to-get treats, they will leave your bulbs alone. At the White House, gardeners put up feeding boxes in an attempt to satiate the furry monsters and it seems to work. They have reduced squirrel damage to bulb beds by 95%.
- Home remedies include sowing cayenne pepper or Tabasco sauce into the soil (or dipping the bulbs in same before planting), as well as scattering mothball flakes on the ground. A favorite Dutch remedy is to interplant *Fritillaria imperialis*, which gives off an odor that squirrels and deer find repellent. If you're plagued by deer and rabbits, planting near the house or lighting areas with motion-detector lights will scare them away. A pet will keep them at bay, too. Cats like to eat moles, squirrels, and mice, while dogs are good for chasing deer and rabbits.
- After placing your bulb in its planting hole, backfill with crushed gravel and soil. Moles and voles won't dig in the gravel. Or try a new product called Permatill. You add it to your soil just once, and it will actually improve drainage and lighten the soil while deterring moles and mice.
- There are many commercial repellents available. You spray these on foliage or onto the bulb before it's planted, and the bitter taste is very unappetizing to would-be munchers. Ropel or Mole-Med are two you can ask for; furthermore, they are not poisonous, so they can be used safely around pets and children. They reputedly work well, but time and weather may wear them away, necessitating a second application. Systemic tablets are another type of repellent. The tablets are placed near the bulb and absorbed through the root system giving the foliage, flower, and bulb an unsavory flavor, creating a perfectly awful meal for our little furry friends. *Bon appétit, varmints!*

—Erin Fournier



CONQUERING



MOTHER



NATURE

**Genetic Engineering
Stakes a Claim on our Gardens**

By Pamela Yu

"Eat all your vegetables, dear," my mother would say at the dinner table. "They're good for you." Now, as I make my way to the produce aisle of the local supermarket, I can still hear her voice, scolding me to eat my greens. Enticed by the neatly stacked displays of nourishing edibles, I stock up on potatoes, corn, tomatoes, squash, and soybeans, all with the confidence that I am doing good to my body. *Right?* Not necessarily. Unbeknownst to most Americans, many of the vegetables found in our grocery stores and restaurants have undergone a DNA transformation via genetic engineering. This is essentially the science of altering the actual cells of life—DNA—through human intervention. Yet, with so many uncertainties about the human and environmental impact of this so-called "biotechnology"—especially as they relate to horticulture—manufacturers, scientists, farmers, and politicians are hard pressed to provide clear answers.

Europe vs. the United States

Americans have been slow to react to these advances in genetic engineering, in part because we have only begun to learn of the news. In Europe, however, eight major grocery chains have already banned what they call "Frankenstein foods," and the public is demanding that labels be placed on all genetically altered foods. One protest group has gone so far as to behead an entire field of genetically engineered sugar beets. Prince Charles, a champion of organic gardening, has also waded into the debate, saying that he would neither eat genetically engineered foods nor serve them to his family or guests, and denouncing "the use of technology that takes mankind into the realms that belonged to God."

However, with all due respects to His Royal Highness, humans have been playing God for quite some time. In fact, humans have been manipulating natural mutations (such as spelt and corn) for thousands of years. Today's bioengineers, however, are no longer working with whole organisms (from the outside in), but are dealing with the very stuff of life—the cells and genes of DNA (from the inside out).

Environmental...and Human Impact

Now that the word is out, many proponents of genetic engineering are having to deal with a backlash of anti-biotechnology sentiment at home and abroad. The Monsanto Company—poised to become one of the largest seed companies in the world—has developed a product line of bioengineered plants, but so far, reaction from the public has been mixed at best.

Of all Monsanto's products, the New Leaf Superior potato has taken the most bruises from critics; still, this spud has its head above the others. Unlike your common potato, New Leaf has the Bt (*Bacillus*

thuringiensis) gene built right into its DNA makeup. Bt is a naturally occurring soil bacterium used by gardeners and organic farmers as a low-toxicity pesticide to control common garden insects without harming beneficial insects. Bioengineered plants now manufacture their own Bt as they grow and, in essence, become their own pesticide producers. But the problem with the new Bt-impregnated plants is that they produce too much Bt (10 to 20 times more than is necessary to control the targeted pests) and for too long a time (an entire growing season). Many fear that constant exposure to the pesticide will lead to Bt-resistant insects and that Bt will ultimately lose its effectiveness as a pest control.

And what about insects, wildlife, and humans who eat the plants? Recent studies show that beneficial insects (including green lacewings, ladybugs, and monarch butterflies) who eat pests reared on genetically engineered crops have a higher mortality rate, delayed development, and more reproductive problems compared with insects who ate pests reared on conventionally grown crops. Although these results have not yet been confirmed outside the laboratory, they serve to remind us of the fragility of an ecological system in the throes of a biological revolution.

The Environment

In the 1970s, we had the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster; in the 1980s, there was the Exxon Valdez oil spill; and critics say "biological pollution" may become the environmental nightmare of the 21st century. Unlike chemical pollution, which is reversible, biological pollution cannot be undone. Once pollen from genetically engineered plants is released into the wild and mixed with other plants, there's no telling what mutants will evolve. Indeed, third- and fourth-generation plants may develop into "superweeds" with totally unexpected traits. When it comes to natur-

al selection, tying Mother Nature's hands is a risky affair.

Michael Pollan, whose article "Playing God in the Garden" appeared recently in the *New York Times Magazine*, articulated the paradox: "...while biotechnology depends for its power on the ability to move genes freely among species and even phyla, its environmental safety depends on the very opposite phenomenon: on the integrity of species in nature and their rejection of foreign genetic material."

Even creepier is the process of "cross-phylum gene splicing." Genes from not only plants but also animals (to improve frost tolerance) and even bacteria (to increase disease resistance) can be incorporated into a plant's DNA to grow the "ideal" crop. This sudden change in a plant's identity does not allow the surrounding plants and animals time to adapt, causing locally adapted plant varieties to die out and endangering biodiversity.

"What's happening," says Shepherd Ogden, founder and president of Cook's Garden Seeds, "is the movement of plant materials from one ecosystem to another, upsetting Mother Nature's natural process of checks and balances."

Can We Eat It?

So, is it safe to eat a New Leaf potato?





Perhaps, but this is a catch-22. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that foods containing additives shown to "materially alter" the product be labeled. But because Bt is a pesticide, not a food additive, Bt-producing potatoes fall under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation. In researching his article, Pollan discovered that the EPA has never tested Bt potatoes for safety. Their reasoning is that if the original potato is safe to eat, and the Bt pesticide added to it is safe, then the Bt potato must also be safe. Some geneticists say that this is a tenuous argument because so much is still unknown about the subtle changes genetic engineering may cause in a food. It's obvious that with biotechnology comes a new paradigm, one that existing food safety laws seem ill-suited to regulate.

Even more disturbing, Pollan revealed that since 1992, as part of the Bush administration's campaign for "regulatory relief," companies themselves can decide whether or not a new protein is safe and whether they need to show it to the FDA. Companies fearful of losing customers and profits will likely downplay any negative effects to avoid a labeling requirement. "Labeling is the key issue," the head of Asgrow Seed Company (a Monsanto subsidiary) admitted. "If you put a label on genetically engineered food, you might as well put a skull and crossbones on it."

When we think of biotechnology, we think of gigantic bugs and steroidal tomatoes attacking our planet. The reality is that Bt-producing corn doesn't look, smell, or even taste different from non-Bt-producing corn. That's why consumers want regulatory agencies to step in and devise guidelines for the labeling of all genetically engineered foods. Polls have shown that 80% to 95% of consumers are in favor of labeling, and 54% want farmers to adopt more organic production methods.

So, to answer the question: *is it safe to eat?* Probably, but until labels are in place, we have no choice but to leave the safety of our health in the hands of biotech companies.

On The Defense

In its defense, Monsanto touts "sustainable development" as the mother of its inventions. According to a press release on their web site, "Many of our products are aimed at helping farmers produce improved crops—crops that yield more and better food—while at the same time limiting the resource consumption and environmental strains that accompany traditional agricultural production methods."

In other words, it's a way to make food production less of a burden on the environment, and crops with built-in toxins mean less use of chemical insecticides. Skeptics say that by being more "eco-efficient," Monsanto will strengthen its existing markets, open up new ones, squeeze out its competitors, and eventually gain control of the global food supply.

Terminator Technology

There are new developments, too. On March 3, 1998, the Delta & Pine Land Company (now owned by Monsanto) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a patent on sterile seeds. This bioengineering technique, dubbed the "terminator technology," alters a plant's DNA so that it produces sterile seeds, requiring farmers and gardeners to purchase new seeds every year. It's a way for biotech companies to stop the time-honored (but unprofitable) tradition of harvesting seeds from heirloom plants and vegetables.

"I've been growing heirlooms for years, using seeds handed down to me by my grandfather," says noted food historian and author William Woys Weaver.

"I fear that the 'terminator technology' will endanger this tradition and contribute to the loss of local agriculture and biodiversity. Third-World farmers will be especially affected. They depend on saved and exchanged seeds as their primary sources. If saving

"I fear that 'terminator technology' will endanger [the heirloom seed] tradition and contribute to the loss of local agriculture and biodiversity."

—William Woys Weaver

seeds becomes impossible, it will be very difficult for them to subsist."

Weaver, known for his heirloom collection, drew an interesting parallel: "In the past, biological developments like corn were harnessed for the good of the whole community. Now, the economic benefit is being concentrated in the hands of a small group of companies that can manipulate the marketplace much in the same way the feudal aristocracy manipulated the manor economies of medieval Europe."

Ethics

In the U.S., there have long been laws against unauthorized propagation of different seeds, and plant varieties themselves began to be patented in the 1970s. But it wasn't until the 1980s that patents were granted for plants' genetic components, which brings up the troubling question: *how can someone claim a patent on nature?* A patent gives the holder control over where, how, and by whom a product can be made—guidelines that seem ill-fitted when it comes to nature. How can we regulate ownership over something that is naturally occurring at random?

Furthermore, those vegetarians who avoid foods with



any and all animal substances contend that by not labeling genetically engineered products, biotech companies are callously disregarding their beliefs. For example, what if the tomatoes on the market shelf were genetically engineered to include flounder genes added for frost tolerance? Again, the laws of nature are being challenged point blank.

Biotech: Another View

Like the food industry, horticulture is big business and knowing what customers want can translate into big returns. But it's not all about vegetables. With increasing demands for perfect-looking ornamental plants, horticultural companies are also looking to scientists to provide them with the best genes.

At NovaFlora, a Philadelphia-based biotech company, everything is coming up roses. These folks are using biotechnology not only to increase the intensity and varieties of rose fragrances, but also to deter pests and fungi. "Our goal is to improve and commercialize high-value ornamental plants," says President and CEO Mike Dobres. "We've turned to biotechnology because the classical way of cross-hybridization is limited in its ability to improve plants. Genetic engineering allows us to incorporate changes not possible through hybridization, including roses resistant to Japanese beetles, aphids, and black spot. Biotechnology targets specific changes, whereas traditional methods are extremely random and rely on selecting novel characteristics from tens of thousands of seedlings."

"The specificity of genetic engineering also affords a more efficient and economic alternative—cutting production time from as much as 10 years to two-to-three years—to that of traditional methods. We are also planning to restrict pollen from these new varieties, making it difficult for them to reproduce should they 'escape' into the wild."

Dobres points to the positive effects of genetic engineering on horticulture. "In the end, we want to give our customers high-quality ornamental plants, eliminate the indiscriminate use of sprays, and decrease environmental pollution and the exposure of humans to such chemicals so they can enjoy their gardens more."

Where Do We Go From Here?

The future of bioengineering is one of uncertainty. For now, our best protection is to have the right to decide whether or not we want to eat a genetically altered food.

With this in mind, the Gardener's Supply Company has launched a media blitz to educate the public on the implications of biotechnology and to encourage them to demand labeling of all genetically engineered foods.

Melissa Margis, community-affairs representative of Fresh Fields/Whole Foods Market at 20th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in Philadelphia, asserts, "we are intensely aware of genetically engineered products and want our customers to know that this is happening." Customers entering the store are even offered a brochure on genetic engineering. "Admittedly, without labeling, manufacturers and suppliers find it difficult to avoid genetically engineered ingredients in their products. But we feel it is important to let our customers know that we are committed to healthy foods and believe in sustainable agriculture."

Fresh Fields is also letting legislators know that its customers want labels put on genetically engineered products. In May, the company sent a petition to Congress, supporting the consumer advocacy group called "Mothers of Natural Law." They are pushing Congress to require USDA and FDA labeling, and would like a five-year halt on the distribution of genetically engineered foods. Also, June 9, 1999, was designated as Whole Foods Market's "National 5% Day," on which 5% of all store sales were donated to a network for farm workers. Whole Foods Market is continually surveying the market to gauge the prevalence of genetically engineered products, alerting manufacturers of genetically engineered ingredients.

In the end, everyone agrees it is time for public discourse on this matter, particularly with so many unanswered questions. What if the genetically altered food isn't as safe for humans as we were told? What will happen to other living forms if these altered genes escape into the wild? And what will happen if these runaway genes turn up in your garden? If we don't ponder these points now, we may end up paying the price for decades, if not forever. Remember, in the world of genetic engineering, there's no going back. ♦

Pamela Vu is Associate Editor at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. This is her first article for *Green Scene*.

Special thanks to Inez Diamond for inspiring this story.

To find out more or to voice your concern, contact your Congressional representative, or email Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman at agsec@USDA.gov. Relevant articles and additional information are available at the following addresses and websites:

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A photograph of a lush rock garden. Large, flat, greyish-brown rocks are arranged in a tiered fashion, creating a naturalistic path or border. Various plants are growing around and between the rocks. In the foreground, there are clumps of tall, thin, yellowish-green grasses. To the right, there are dense, low-growing green plants with small leaves. In the background, more rocks and a variety of green foliage are visible, including some taller, darker green plants. The overall scene is a well-maintained garden with a focus on rocks and diverse plant life.

THE STORY OF ROCK GARDENING AT WATNONG

by Ruby Weinberg

Many people develop a passion for gardening in their youth. Others discover it later in adulthood, usually with their move to a first home. However, not every flower blooms in spring, and some gardeners take up the necessary skills in the early autumn of their lives. That describes Helen and Frank Donn of Morris Plains, New Jersey. The Donns were in their mid fifties and newly retired from their jobs when they bought the one-acre property of their deceased neighbors next door. At the time, the couple could scarcely tell the difference between a conifer and a cotoneaster, but nevertheless, they began to create what soon became one of the area's finest rock gardens. Their neighbors, you see, had been the proprietors of famed Watnong Nursery.

The water garden on the berm. A standout among the conifers is *Iris pallida* 'Variegata.'

LATE BLOOMERS

The Original Watnong

Watnong is a place legendary in horticultural history. Older members of the Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS), remember its founders, Hazel and Don Smith, who lived here from 1960 through the mid-1980s. In its heyday, the Smiths operated a nursery that had been crowded with containers and somewhat disheveled, but every plant sold was a gem. They traveled far to locate and sell slow-growing ornamentals to area gardeners. Don Smith also raised some from seed and rooted cuttings as well as introduced unique mutations such as the well-known *Daphne x burkwoodii* 'Carol Mackie.'

When Hazel and Don Smith died, the Donns were suddenly inspired to transform their now-two acres into a real garden. At first, it was a self-proclaimed mission to return the Smith's plant introductions to Watnong, since most of the originals had been dispersed in botani-

cal gardens. However, the "legacy" that the Donns first planned soon blossomed into full-blown plant collections of dwarf conifers and stable rock garden perennials.

Cultivating Rock Plants

Rock-garden plants are often difficult to grow in much of the northeastern United States. Heavy clay soils are but one of the reasons that many Watnong members find hypertufa troughs to be a partial solution. They are containers simulating stone which are created by mixing peat, sand, perlite, and Portland cement around a temporary form. When set, the latter is removed creating a fine habitat for the more "iffy" rock plants. [For more information on hypertufa and rock gardening in troughs, see Dick Van Duzer's article "Rocky Mountain High" in the July, 1999 issue. Also see NARGS's "Handbook On Troughs," 1996; contact the PHS library for copies.]

The Donns have constructed several

of these troughs, but in sunny areas, they created berms and raised beds for their rock plants. Besides the advantage of preparing soil mixtures for small areas, raised beds bring the diminutive plants closer to eye level. "We started by submerging boulders, then built up a hill by mounding with gritty soil," Helen explains. It is home to the white-flowered *Delosperma lineare* and pink *D. cooperi* plus a wide assortment of dianthus and many other rock plants. "They are at their prime in late April/early May," says Helen.

On the former Smith property was a bed of large, dry-laid rocks and cement blocks that had been started by the nursery couple. Frank Donn disposed of the concrete, gathered similar rocks from friends' farms, and then began reconstruction. On the top, the Donns left gray-leaved dianthus, plus dwarf forms of boxwood, holly, pine, and cypress. A chink in the wall contains a specimen juniper, *Juniperus communis* 'Berkshire.' This 20-year-old, silvery-blue conifer grows only fractions of an inch per year.

Rock Gardening in the Shade

Are shade trees, screen plantings, and tall flowering shrubs suitable for a rock garden? They are when they provide a framework. Visitors to the Donns' special world expect to see "the choice, the small, the slow growing," which is how Helen describes their goal. Yet, in places, the property has a canopy of native trees, plus magnificent introduced specimens such as the *Franklinia alatamaha*; the shrub-like, July-blooming *Elliottia racemosa*, and *Acer shirasawanum* 'Aureum,' a Japanese maple with yellow foliage. Nor can one ignore that tall, West Coast redwood at the rear of the garden, *Sequoiadendron giganteum* 'Hazel Smith,' with its gray-blue needles. It is surprisingly hardy in this part of New Jersey. On small properties, however, rock gardeners must be highly selective and eliminate all but a few large plants to maintain the proper scale.

The many gardeners who believe that



Helen and Frank Donn working in their garden.

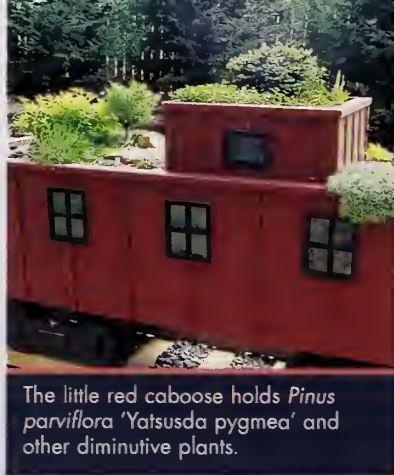
shade, in places, is a deterrent to rock gardening would profit from the Donns' example. When Frank cleared his property, many native trees were left, pruned high to lift the canopy, and then planted underneath by Helen with groundcovers such as Himalayan- and Japanese-painted ferns. To this, she added 33 other ferns, plus a variety of pulmonarias, tiarellas, astilbe, heucheras, asarums and more. Wildflower enthusiasts will also be pleased to find here uncommon natives such as *Uvularia* and *Jeffersonia*.

Dwarf conifers are everywhere in Watnong Gardens. *Picea abies* 'Echiniformis', the hedgehog spruce, is a favorite because of its uniquely squat shape and irregular, prickly growth. Other gems include a mature *Pinus strobus* 'Ontario' with blue-green needles, and the cypress, *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Drath,' which is a dense 12-inch gray column with golden highlights. A very slow-growing conifer here is the true *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana' planted by Hazel Smith in 1969. At present, this Hinoki cypress is only 1½ feet tall and 2 feet wide.

Gardeners who have watched their own conifers become giants might want to try slower growing varieties. After researching their growth rates, it is a good idea to make your purchases at specialty nurseries that pride themselves on proper labeling. Nurserymen sometimes swap with the Donns taking seeds or cuttings in return for superb plants that are hard to locate. It is a system that has enriched their collections. At present, Frank and Helen have over 430 species and hybrids of conifers alone. Helen explains that very dwarf conifers are not entirely maintenance free and that brushing away debris can be time consuming. This careful upkeep prevents the tiny, tight needles from becoming diseased. She also allows no weed competition to any of her plants, a job that occupies her throughout the growing season.

Final Reflections

All too often, rock gardeners who travel to mountainous areas fall in love with high alpine, and then become discouraged when they find them to be short-lived in their gardens. However, the Donns have demonstrated all the fine things that enthusiasts can do to successfully maintain a rock garden: build and plant troughs and grow dwarf



The little red caboose holds *Pinus parviflora* 'Yatsusda pygma' and other diminutive plants.

Hop on Board

But that's not all there is in the garden. In addition to maintaining Watnong, Frank spent the past two winters crafting the "Watnong Choo-Choo." It is placed at the far end of one of the many beds running longitudinally from the house. This six-car stationary train is child-size and complete with a locomotive. Each car top is a trough filled with topsoil plus equal parts of peat or compost, perlite, and last, pea gravel.

A tufted blue grass, *Festuca glauca*, appears like steam emerging from the locomotive's smoke-stack. A striking feature in the caboose is a tiny Japanese maple, *Acer palmatum* 'Shishigashira.' Other car tops are planted with small dianthus, the double-flowered heron's bill, *Erodium x variable* 'Roseum,' and a variety of other diminutive plants. The train has now become one of the more popular attractions at an already wonderful garden.

conifers, low shrubs, and small, stable perennials. It is surely the way to go, especially if you are a lowland gardener.

Several years ago, Panayoti Kelaidis, Curator of Rock Gardens at the Denver Botanical Garden, visited with the Donns. He told them: "In Denver, we have over 100 helpers working on an area this size. It is incredible that you two people have accomplished so much on your own."

For two late-blooming gardeners, this was high praise, indeed. ♦

How to Obtain Plants for Your Rock Garden

1. Grow them from seed. Members of the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS) can purchase, at very low cost, 25 packets from their annual seed exchange. From 4,000 to 5,000 different kinds are listed each year. The "Rock Garden Quarterly" of the NARGS describes the germination, uses, and cultural needs of many species.
2. Purchase 2- or 3-inch potted plants from a specialist and grow them for a year or two before setting into your garden.
3. Divide overly large rock plants. Mats are among the easiest. Merely cut away an outer pad with roots and set out the small plants on their own.
4. In late summer, take cuttings from dwarf conifers. Side shoots are usually better. With mini-dwarfs, an inch or two is long enough. Use only one-year-old wood. Stick in a peat rooting medium and place in tightly closed cold frame over winter. The following spring, they should be ready for individual potting. Taking a heel cutting and using a root hormone sometimes help speed rooting.
5. Swap with fellow enthusiasts. Hopefully, not only will you receive fine plants, but also, your mutual friendship will spring to mind every time you see the plant in your garden. Talk about a "win-win" situation.

Ruby Weinberg, a long-time gardener and freelance writer, has followed the events at Watnong since 1962. She has saved several Smith catalogues, the oldest dating back to 1964.

To visit Watnong Gardens, call Helen and Frank Donn for an appointment and directions. Their address is: 2379 Watnong Terrace, Morris Plains, NJ 07950, (973) 538-8633. For more information on NARGS, surf the net at www.nargs.org or write P.O. Box 67, Millwood, NY 10546.

LETTERS

I am in charge of controlling and removing invasive exotic plants from our preserves here in Pennsylvania, so I was shocked to see Russian olive, honeysuckle, and bittersweet listed in the article about beach planting ["Surrounded by Sand" by Gretchen F. Coyle, May/June 1999 issue]. I happen to know that Russian olive knows no boundaries and is a real problem on Fire Island, a barrier beach island off the coast of Long Island. As for the other plants, I strongly feel that all responsible gardeners should stay away from these aggressive growers. Nurseries should not sell these plants under any circumstances, since they are a severe threat to the biodiversity of our natural areas. Please help us in our ongoing struggle to educate the public on this subject.

Karen Budd,
Invasive Species Specialist
The Nature Conservancy

Gretchen F. Coyle responds: "I appreciate Ms. Budd's concern over invasive plants. However, for those of us who are lucky enough to live along the New Jersey shore—where developers have decimated greenery of all types, leaving us with "gravel lawns"—we feel that it is better to plant native foliage and old-time favorites rather than struggle with newer types of tender plants. Native plants go hand in hand with the theory of "xeriscape," since watering and over-fertilizing can be kept to a minimum. Birds coming north and south along the East Coast flyway also crave this type of greenery. Russian olives, honeysuckle, and bittersweet were probably also here on Long Beach Island during the 1600s when the Leni Lenape Indians camped here. So who is to say whether they are "invasive exotic plants" or charming natives? Furthermore, most lots along the New Jersey coast are 50' by 100', so no one is about to let them get too far out of control."

CORRECTIONS:

•Thanks to all the *Green Scene* readers and lepidopterists who spotted the incorrect labeling of the artistic rendering on the back cover of our May issue. Jason Weintraub, lepidopterist for the Academy of Natural Sciences, confirmed that the charming creature is a butterfly, not a moth, and its correct name is *Polyura debaani sultan*.

•In the "Esprit de Corps" story [May 1999], the author inadvertently misattributed the quote on page 30. It was actually said

by Betsy Barlow Rogers, founder of the Central Park Conservancy in New York.

•In the story on "Lemon Herbs" in the May/June issue, reader Faye Brawner noticed a common error identifying *Pelargonium radens* as a lemon-scented herb. A noted pelargonium expert, she noted that many major reference books and nurseries incorrectly identify this plant. Faye says that *P. citronellum* has the best lemon scent.



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"The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke" by Richard Dadd, 1855-64, oil on canvas, Tate Gallery, London.

This is a prime example of Victorian fairy painting, a genre popular in the mid-19th century Britain. The artist wrote a long poem describing the subject of this work, which involves a variety of fairy figures viewing the Fairy Feller's prowess at splitting a hazelnut. Our vantage point is behind tall grass, evoking a feeling that this is a forbidden scene. Recognized as one of Dadd's two fairy masterpieces, which are also referred to as his "mad paintings," since he was confined to an asylum when he painted them.

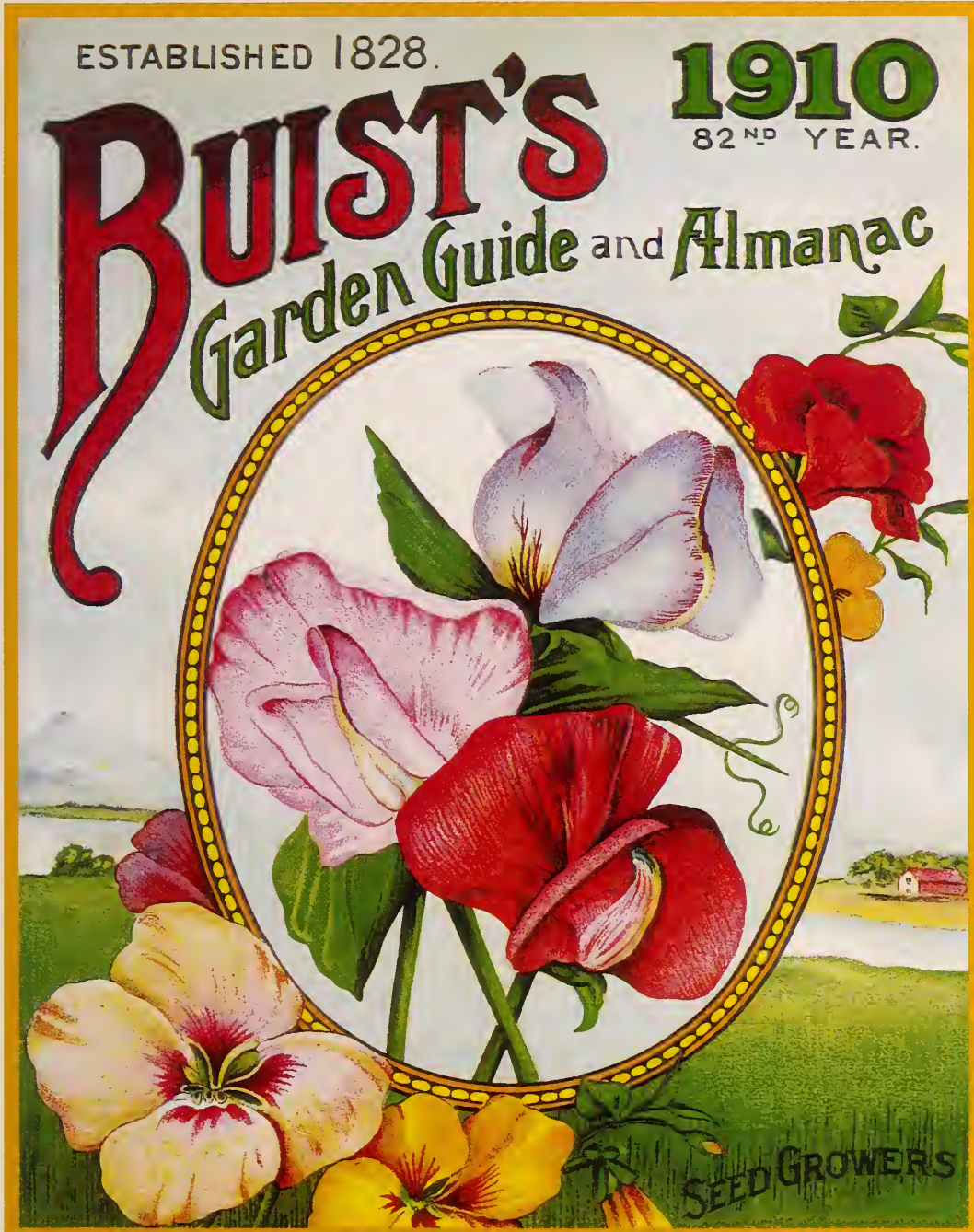
From the collection of the Tate Gallery, London.



GREEN scene

THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

NOV./DEC. 1999 • \$3.00



THE AMERICAN GARDEN

C O N T E N T S

4. The Potting Shed

6. Bulb-Forcing Project

Here, we are introduced to the fascinating world of the "bulb-garden pot." Using this method, a gardener will be able to create a lush springtime display in a container, featuring a full succession of colorful bulbs that last about a month. Better yet, it blooms during the full fury of winter. *Interested?*



THE AMERICAN GARDEN

10. An Englishman in an American Garden

Meet Chris Woods, director of Chanticleer, which is one of Philadelphia's most enchanting gardens. In this colorful interview, the conversation ranges from the differences between British and American design to the need for a more global approach to plant selection.

14. Know Your Watershed

America may be covered in concrete, lawn, asphalt, and gardens, but underneath them all are watersheds—the natural systems that carry water through the earth. Many of them, however, are in danger, threatened by development and pollution. Do you know your watershed? This article promises to give you a good start.

18. Colonial Revival

It was over 220 years ago that a series of pivotal events gave birth to our country. One of the most climactic occurred in Bucks County, when General George Washington and his troops crossed the Delaware River to invade Trenton, NJ giving our fledgling nation its first major military victory. But these were not the only heroes—the hilly landscape along the river also played its crucial part in the battle. Now, let's revisit our colonial past and learn how gardening and history intermingle in this verdant corner of the region.

23. In Praise of the Resourceful

One notable virtue of our nation's gardeners is that they are so resourceful. When the chips are down, these green-thumbers can solve a problem with a combination of common sense, handy raw materials, and a deep desire to get the job done. In this piece, we celebrate several resourceful individuals who help make up the rich quilt of American gardening. Their achievements are inspiring.

27. The Christmas Wreath

Learn how to make a holiday wreath in this fun and colorful "how to" article, even if you have never done one before.

30. Gold Medal Plant Winners

Here they are: the recipients of the 2000 Gold Medal Plant Awards given out by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Each one of them is a tough, beautiful woody plant that deserves a place in your backyard.



34. Classified Ads

Cover: A 1910 Buist catalog cover, from the archives of The PHS McLean Library, Philadelphia.

GREENscene

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The question "What is an American garden?" pops up in garden conversation with some regularity, but to my knowledge, has never been answered satisfactorily. Consider the fact that most of us know what an "English garden" looks like and we know what a "Japanese Zen garden" is...but what does an "American garden" look like? With this in mind, we've devoted a portion of this *Green Scene* to exploring this mystery.

Our American Style

The real editorial impetus behind this issue stems mostly from frustration. Think about all the times you've heard someone say they're going to put an English garden in front of their house. Now isn't that a silly idea...an English garden in the American 'burbs? Do English folks say to their neighbors, "Cheerio, Cecil—I'm going to put a jolly nice *American* garden in front of my cottage"? I doubt it. So, part of the question "What is an American garden" is really "Why are Americans so obsessed with English gardens?" Not that there's anything wrong with the many lovely gardens on the other side of the Atlantic, but maybe it's time we step back and celebrate our own gardening style for a change.

Part of this horticultural low self esteem is that we don't, nor will we ever, have Britain's fabulously moist climate, which makes its flowers bloom like crazy and their gardeners feel perhaps a little overly bold and confident. On the other hand, our culture has one great asset that few nations can rival—*diversity*. The ethnic fusion of American society can at times create dazzling combinations of creative thought and action. When this melting-pot concept taps into the gardening universe, we inevitably stumble upon wonderful new plants, combinations, and designs. If you think about it, the American garden isn't about patriotism—it's about eclecticism.

Look at the current tropical-plant craze. Where the ornamental garden of a decade ago featured the standard array of

Letter From the Editor

annuals and perennials, many of today's American gardens now mix bright coleus with giant elephant ears (*Alocasia* sp. or *Colocasia* sp.), or variegated, acid-green canna foliage with sizzling zinnia and dahlia blossoms. This year, my small suburban garden has taken on a strange mix of styles, though I admit, quite unintentionally so. There is the typical combination of perennials and annuals, but also large stones and shrubs stemming from a fondness for the Asian style, and skyscraping ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae* syn. *Erianthus*) that gives a nod to the native-plant movement. There are even hot-blooded caladiums and purple castor beans to add a shot of the tropics. This may seem a crazy mish-mash of style and shape, but somehow it works and further suggests a typical American solution to many things: *just throw it all in the pot and stir*.

As a result, there is an endless variety of American gardens. One is the underappreciated "mailbox garden." If you look around this country, many people have decorated their mailboxes with a ground-level planting of flowers. This may seem odd, considering that the mailbox is a purely functional, even dull yard accessory, yet millions of Americans choose to festoon this postal shrine with everything from impatiens and begonias to daylilies, clematis, and more. I consider this one of America's most endearing garden eccentricities.

Another of my favorite styles of American gardens are those I see around farmhouses in the Northeast, notably in northern Vermont where I visit each summer. Farming families often make terrific gardeners, able to create eye-popping vistas of phlox, cleome, and marigolds, along with Minivan-sized eggplant, squash, and other vegetables of ungodly dimension. Their success, I suspect, has something to do with an endless

(and enviable) supply of cow and horse manure, but these farmer gardeners also have their own special sense of style and order. They perfectly intertwine

beauty with functionality and that proves its own reward.

This brings us back to the issue of *Green Scene* you're holding in your hands. In the following pages, we'll visit the site of George Washington's crossing of the Delaware to defeat the Hessians in Trenton, an area full of robust history and interesting colonial gardens. We'll look at some of the hard issues surrounding our local parks and public spaces, and how we can best preserve them for the future. Add to that an intriguing tale on the famed resourcefulness of the American gardener, as well as an interview with Chris Woods, director of one of Philadelphia's finest gardens, Chanticleer, who pokes several astute holes in the English vs. American garden debate.

What we hope you gain from this issue is not a definition of the term "American garden," but a new set of parameters to help you probe this idea to greater depths. Then go take a look at your own garden—is it an eclectic American place or does it owe its allegiance to horticultural empires of the Old World? Either way is perfectly fine, of course, but if you desire to celebrate the American style, then employ a little cultural diversity in your planning. *How?* Just find some plants or ornaments you like, throw them in the pot...and stir.

Pete Prown
greenscene@penubort.org



The Pottling Shed



GARDEN NET

Savage Art

"Carnivorous plants exist where other plants struggle, whether it's from poor soil, too much water, or whatever. They've changed that struggle into an evolutionary asset. And where other plants have appearances, the carnivorous plants have tangible, even fierce personalities. That's what I try to capture in paint."

So says R. Scott Bennett, a noted landscape painter whose life-long hobby of collecting, drawing, and painting carnivorous plants has blossomed into a series of realistic prints of these exotic, floriferous flesh-lovers.



"I started doing botanicals of butterworts, pitcher plants, sundews and Venus flytraps because no one was doing them with any sense of inspiration. Originally, they were done solely by botanists and scientists, many of whom viewed the task as a work requirement. I'm more concerned about the formal aesthetics of form, color, and shape, as well as the ways these elements can be combined to make a painting. It's a source of professional pride to me that the finished work holds up with the best work that has already been done."

Since 1979, Bennett's botanical watercolors and drawings have been seen in a number of periodicals such as *American Horticulturist*, *Green Scene*, *HortScience*, and *The Carnivorous Plant Newsletter*.

Recently, carnivorous-plant expert Peter D'Amato asked Bennett to illustrate several chapters of his popular book on growing carnivores at home, *The Savage Garden*. Not long after that, Scott began offering prints of these fearsome horticultural creatures to the public.

"My goal is to paint convincing renderings and lay them out in a way that shows characteristics one would only know with an intimate knowledge of the plant. There is such a sense of wonder and mystery about carnivorous plants—in the wild, they are so different from other plants that they appear almost alien. Still, the main reason I paint them is simply because they are beautiful."

—Steve Maurer

Prints can be purchased from the artist at (315) 446-9944, or rspainter@aol.com

A 'Knock Out' Rose for 2000

A completely "maintenance-free" rose? According to insider buzz, the new shrub rose, 'Knock Out' from Star Roses, may be a genuine contender for that title. Bred from eight different roses (including 'Carefree Beauty,' 'Applejack,' and 'Eddie's Crimson') and already the winner of an All-America

Rose Selection Award, 'Knock Out' is reputed to be extraordinarily disease, insect, and drought resistant. In fact, Japanese beetles find the taste of its foliage or blooms quite unsavory. As for deadheading, don't trouble yourself—just leave spent blossoms on to form lovely rosehips in the fall.

TULIPMANIA. The tulip is becoming a popular favorite in the literary world. This past spring came the U.S. release of the best-selling British history, *The Tulip*, by Anna Pavord, subtitled "The Story of a Flower That Has Made Men Mad." Also new are the non-fiction titles, *Tulipomania* by Mike Dash and *Tulipmania* by Anne Goldgar. There's even a new horticultural book called *Tulips*, by *Green Scene* writer, Scott D. Appell. Finally, the spring of 2000 will bring forth *Tulip Fever*, a novel by Deborah Moggach. To boot, the movie rights to this romantic thriller, which is set against the backdrop of 17th-century Amsterdam, have been bought by Steven Spielberg's Dreamworks company. Yes, even Hollywood big-wigs suffer from the effects of tulipmania.



BACK IN BEES-NUS. Eighty-year-old Ed Weiss and his younger partner Howland Blackiston have created a new Internet store just for bee-keeping hobbyists, www.bee-commerce.com. The site

continued



In addition to its tough demeanor, it's also a real beauty, with florescent cherry-color blossoms that are 3- to 3-1/2 inches in diameter. At home in Zones 4-9, it has clusters of 3 to 15 flowers that give off a light tea-rose fragrance on the small, bushy plant. Its leaves are a dark, leathery green with a tinge of blue and, come fall, the foliage turns eggplant-purple. 'Knock Out' will be available to the public at many garden centers in the spring of 2000.

Garden Tips: November

- You can plant bulbs until the soil freezes. Daffodils, however, are best planted in September or early October because they require a longer period for root development.

- Late autumn is the best time to put the roses to bed. To prevent disease and fungus from overwintering, clean your rose beds by removing dead leaves and other debris and spray the bushes with dormant oil to kill bacteria. You can also protect the crown of the rose from winter weather. Cover it with at least 1 foot of tree leaves or straw, or mound with soil or mulch (do not use rose leaves, as they may harbor disease). You can also use rose cones that are available commercially. The climbers or long canes can be tied down to avoid wind damage, or wrapped in burlap with a layer of straw for insulation.

- Cold frames and other season extenders should be protected from damage by ice and snow or high winds. Once their jobs are done, these items should be repaired if necessary and put away, if possible.

- Drain your garden ponds and fountains, making certain to turn off and drain all outside connections to prevent freezing and thawing damage to the pipes and lines. If your pond has fish and is deep enough (about 3 feet), you can leave it filled, as long as there is still a pump or

bubbler providing the fish with oxygen. You can also buy floating de-icers that work all winter.

- November is also the perfect time to spruce up those fallow window boxes and containers by planting conifers and hardy foliage. At the PHS headquarters on 20th and Arch in Philadelphia, staff horticulturist Nancy O'Donnell uses the following plants to create a great winter effect:

Carex morrowii 'Old Gold' (Japanese sedge)
Cornus stolonifera (red-twig dogwood)
Nandina domestica (heavenly bamboo)
Jasminum nudiflorum (winter jasmine)
Ilex verticillata 'Afterglow' (winterberry)
Ilex 'Sparkleberry' (winterberry)
Euonymus fortunei 'Emerald 'n' Gold'
Ilex crenata 'Helleri' (holly)
Juniperus horizontalis 'Bar Harbor' (creeping juniper)
Salix 'Flame' (willow)

—Erin Fournier

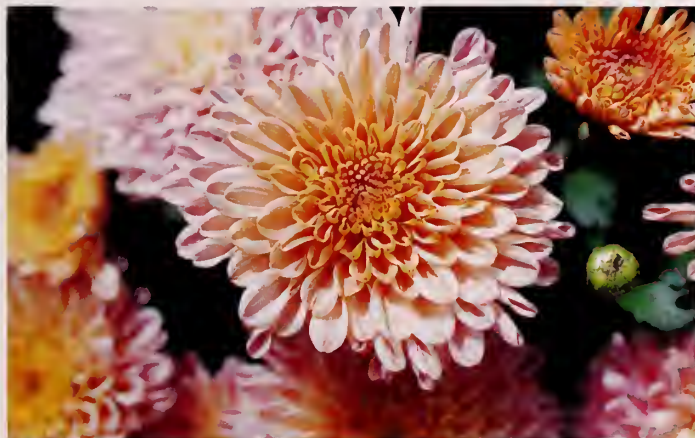


Photo by Pete Prown

offers a comprehensive collection of bee-related products and advice for those interested in pollinating their gardens or harvesting their own honey (a single beehive can produce over 100 pounds of honey a year). The company can even ship 11,000 live bees to your door. Now that's sure to create a buzz!

PERK UP YOUR ROSES. If your cut roses or tulips start to droop in the vase, don't throw them out. Just put them in a sink or bathtub filled with lukewarm water for a few hours. During that time, they'll absorb water and sink to the bottom. Once this happens, take them out and they'll look fresh again.

SUPER FERTILIZER & PEST CONTROL? We know about organic compost from food scraps and yard waste, but what about compost from the ocean? A company called Coast of Maine is now marketing a fertilizer made from salmon. Their **Fermented Salmon Organic Fertilizer** includes numerous minerals and fatty acids which reputedly help with germination, greening and budding, increased foliage, and stress recovery after transplanting. Flower enthusiasts also claim it does wonders as a spray, deterring wildlife with its aroma and curing leaf ills like powdery mildew, black spot, aphids, and white flies. Ask your local nursery for more info or call the company directly at (800) 345-9315.

Let's Hear From You!

What do you think of this issue of *Green Scene*? And which stories did you like...and which ones didn't tickle your fancy? Lend us your compliments, critiques, or complaints, all of which will help us create a better magazine for you.

Send your thoughts to us at the following address: Green Scene Magazine, P.O. Box 7780-1839, Philadelphia, PA 19182-1642. You can also email us at: greenscene@pennhort.org



A bulb-garden pot at its peak. After approximately 3 weeks indoors, *Muscari*, hyacinths, *Crocus*, and daffodils bloom together.

FORCED

MARCH

Create the Feeling of Spring with a "Bulb-Garden Pot"

by Art Wolk

There's a hot new trend in bulb forcing called a "bulb-garden pot." This creative concept allows gardeners to plant many different types of bulbs in the same container. These pots are planted in the fall, chilled for 10-12 weeks, and then forced to bloom indoors. The flower display starts with *Crocus*, *Iris reticulata*, or some other early bulbs and is followed by the later-blooming bulbs, thus simulating the bloom sequence of their outdoor brethren.

My experience with this type of bulb planting started about three years ago, garden clubs started asking me to include information about bulb-garden pots in my lectures. I resisted as long as I could, giving one lame excuse after another. Finally, one club made me an "offer I couldn't refuse," but insisted that I do an entire workshop on bulb-garden pots. Caught between a rock garden and a hard place, I had reached that life-altering moment when it was more painful to stay the same than to change. So, I finally gave in and planted my first bulb-garden pot. You don't have to be a genius to figure out what happened next: I ended up loving it.

Within a few days of bringing my first bulb-garden pot indoors, the *Crocus* bloomed, followed a few days later by *Iris reticulata*. Ten days later, early daffodils flowered, and a week after that, the tulips bloomed. Instead of the mess I had imagined, the foliage from the early bulbs gently and gracefully spilled over the side of the clay pot, immensely adding to the beauty of the whole miniature landscape.

In a word, I became hooked, and I think you will too. Producing a bulb

garden in a pot is truly a simple endeavor. Just follow these directions and you'll have your own colorful bulb garden indoors, just when winter is doing its worst outdoors.

The Best Bulbs to Plant

To have a bulb-garden pot that stays in bloom for a full month, you'll need a wide variety of bulbs, including those that bloom early, mid-season, and late. The early bulbs are those that bloom outdoors from February through mid-March in USDA Zone 6. There's a tremendous variety of these diminutive bulbs (also called the "minor" bulbs), but I generally use *Crocus* and *Iris reticulata*. These bulbs begin blooming within 3-7 days of bringing them indoors and last about 7 days, at which time the mid-season bulbs are beginning to show color.

The mid-season bulbs I use include hyacinths, most daffodils (*Narcissus*), and grape hyacinths (*Muscari armeniacum*). These bulbs generally bloom outdoors from mid-March to mid-April. In your bulb-garden pot, they'll start blooming after about 16 days and will last for about a week or more. My late season bulbs are usually tulips. These generally bloom outdoors from April 15th to May 10th, and bloom indoors after about 23 days of forcing and maintain their bloom 7-10 days.

Planting Your Bulb-Garden Pot

To put on a truly wonderful display indoors, you'll need a 12 to 14-inch pot, preferably one made of clay. I always use clay pots because they wick away excess water and keep air content high in the planting medium, thus reducing the chance of fungal disease. If you have your heart set on using a plastic



Top: After 10 weeks of cold treatment, your bulb-garden pot can be rinsed and brought indoors. **Bottom:** After 28 days of blooming, the tulips (*Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty') are at their peak and the daffodils are still in bloom. Notice how the *Crocus* foliage gracefully spills over the side of the pot.

1



Plant the first layer of daffodils.

2



Cover with soil, but so that you can still see the tops of the underlying bulbs.

3



Plant the second layer of daffodils between the tops of the bottom layer.

4



Plant a layer of tulips, hyacinths, *Muscari* (grape hyacinth), *Iris reticulata*, and *Crocus*.

5



Continue filling with *Crocus*.

6



Cover with potting mix, but making sure that you can still see the tops of the underlying bulbs. Then, plant the second layer of *Muscari*, *Iris*, and *Crocus*.

7



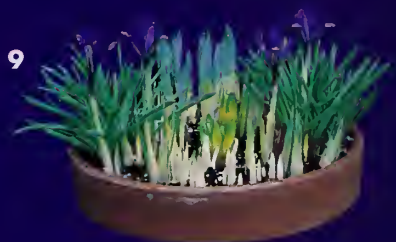
Fill out the rest of this layer with bulbs.

8



Cover with a dome of planting medium and firm with the palm of your hand.

9



After 10 weeks of cold treatment, the pot is cleaned and brought indoors. Within a few days, *Iris reticulata* 'Violet Beauty' begins blooming.

container, which admittedly is lighter to lug around, just be careful not to over-water.

Since most spring-blooming bulbs do best in a medium that has both moisture and high air content, I use a porous soil mix, such as Pro-Mix BX. It's made up of 60% sphagnum peat moss, 20% perlite, 20% vermiculite, and a variety of nutrients. (It is available at Agway and many garden centers.)

After soaking your clay container in water for at least an hour, cover the drainage hole with a piece of broken clay pot. Next, fill the pot with planting

medium to within 4 to 6 inches of the top. Before planting the bulbs, take a look at the catalog from which you ordered your bulbs. The ultimate height of each variety is usually given in inches. With this information, you can arrange your bulb-garden pot the way a portrait photographer arranges a group picture, with the tallest "subjects" in the back and the shortest in the front. Consequently, the minor bulbs would go in the front, the bulbs that yield medium-sized plants go in the middle, and the bulbs producing the tallest plants are placed in the back.

Don't be afraid to pack the bulbs cheek-to-jowl. Remember: The more bulbs you plant now, the more flowers you'll have later. In fact, *Crocus*, *Iris*, *Muscari*, and daffodils can be double-layered for a really glorious display. (Very few tulips can tolerate being double layered and double-layered hyacinths rarely bloom uniformly.)

Double-layering works like this: For daffodils, only fill the pot half-way with potting medium and plant a layer of daffodils. Next, cover with soil, but so that you can still see the tops of the bulbs. Finally, plant another layer of daffodils

between the tops of the underlying bulbs. Double-layering *Crocus*, *Iris*, or *Muscari* works the same way, except that you begin higher up, with the bottom layer about 4 inches from the top, and the upper layer about 2 inches higher.

After planting your bulbs, cover with a dome of soil, and firm the planting mix with the palm of your hand. This is done to prevent the bulbs from pushing their way out of the pot as they vigorously send down roots.

Cold Treatment

Most spring-blooming bulbs have to go through a cold period (between 40-50°F) for 8-10 weeks before they can be forced indoors. These temperatures are necessary for root formation and flower-stem extension. One of the best places to give your bulbs the temperatures they need is as simple as a hole in the ground. It may sound unsophisticated, but it works.

Pick a site where water doesn't collect and dig down about 15-18 inches. Place your bulb-garden pot in the bottom; then, after placing a tall stick next to the pot, fill the hole with soil. To be certain that water drains away from the spot, create a crown of soil over the area. The stick should protrude about 3 feet above the soil level. Next, pile about 2 feet of leaves over the soil to keep it from freezing hard in the winter.

Producing a Spring Season in a Pot

After 10 weeks of cold treatment, you can begin your indoor spring season. Even if there's a foot of snow outside, the stick you put next to your bulb-garden pot can still be seen. After removing the leaf mulch, carefully dig from the side of the hole toward your pot to prevent damaging the bulbs. When you get close, just use your fingers.

After removing the pot from the ground, clean off the excess soil. I actually connect my hose in mid-winter and wash the pot down. Be sure to remove



After 12 days, the *Crocus* is peaking and *Iris reticulata* 'Harmony' is beginning to bloom.

enough soil from the top so that you have sufficient space to water the pot indoors.

SOURCES:

Brent and Becky's Bulbs

7463 Heath Trail
Gloucester, VA 23061
Phone: 877-661-2852
(877-No.1 BULB)

Dutch Gardens

P.O. Box 200
Adelphia, NJ 07710-0200
Phone: 800-818-3861

John Scheepers, Inc.

23 Tulip Drive
Bantam, CT 06750
Phone: 860-567-0838

Van Engelen, Inc.

23 Tulip Drive
Bantam, CT 06750
Phone: 860-567-8734

Now you can get ready for an early dose of spring! Given enough light, warmth, and moisture, your potted bulbs will start blooming within a week. Pick a sunny window where the temperature is 55-68°F. Be sure to choose a spot where temperatures stay below 70°F, even when it's sunny; otherwise the flowers may not emerge.

As I've described above, the minor bulbs will begin blooming in 3-7 days and last for about a week. Just when these flowers begin dying, your hyacinths, early daffodils, and grape hyacinths should start to show color. And, by the time the mid-season flowers fade, your tulips should begin to bloom. By the time the show ends, it'll be at least one month since you brought your bulb-garden pot indoors.

One last bit of advice: When you're finished forcing your potted bulbs, you can save them for outdoor bloom. (Forcing weakens the bulbs, so they shouldn't be forced two years in a row.) Snip off the dead blooms, put the pot back in the sun, and continue watering. When the foliage turns yellow, carefully remove the bulbs from the pot and plant them in your garden.

Embracing Change

In retrospect, I'm quite thankful that I was compelled to force bulbs in this new way. You purists can stick to planting one type of bulb in a pot, while the rest of us welcome this new technique and enjoy watching a month-long spring season unfold indoors. Give it a try! ❖

Although he considers himself "old fashioned" by nature, Art Walk has changed enough to embrace potted-bulb gardening. Still, he claims to feel naked if he doesn't wear a tie to work, takes pictures with an old Nikon camera, and hasn't changed his hairstyle in 35 years. Art regularly writes and lectures about a variety of gardening topics.



The Passionate

by Fran Sorin

There are gardens and then there are *gardens*. One of the Philadelphia region's best is Chanticleer, a "pleasure garden" developed by Adolph Rosengarten on seven acres in Wayne in 1912 and later, substantially expanded by his son. Chanticleer is a strongly romantic place, intended to evoke a deep emotional response, rather than a dry academic one—it is for that reason that none of the plants are labeled. At the helm of it all is Chris Woods, the garden's outspoken director and head designer. A native of England but now a U.S. citizen, Woods started his career at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew, and has worked in three other major gardens in the U.K. We met up with Woods recently to get his insights on the differences between American and English garden design, as well as on the reasons why we garden.

WHAT IS AMERICAN GARDEN DESIGN?

I have no idea. Haven't got a clue.

OKAY THEN, LET'S GO BACK TO WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO THE UNITED STATES. DID YOU TRAVEL AROUND AT ALL?

Yes, I came here in 1977 and traveled around the country for eight months. In 1983, I moved here permanently and after a transitional period came to Chanticleer. What struck me about American public gardens when I came here 16 years ago was that there weren't any plants in them. I couldn't figure out where the plants were. They were more like "landscapes," with lots of lawn.

WHEN YOU SAY THERE WERE NO PLANTS IN THESE GARDENS, WHAT DO YOU MEAN—NO PERENNIALS?

Right. The only garden that really interested me, because it had a passionate side as opposed to an intellectual one, was Wave Hill in New York. Its director, Marco Polo Stufano, was the only American whom I met in the early years who understood the English obsession with plants.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE THIS "OBSESSION" A LITTLE MORE?

I think what was missing in the States was an artist's view of the garden and that's often still the case today. In England, other than an arboretum's maple or pine collection, the gardens are designed to elicit an emotional response. And I think the reason that English gardens are so different and, in some ways, so much better for plantsmen is that they are not created from an academic perspective. Other

than the old botanic gardens in the universities, most of the gardens that we talk about as "good English gardens" have nothing to do with the educational system in England. In this country, on the other hand, it appears that many botanical gardens at universities or college campuses are being managed by academicians.

I'VE ALWAYS ASSUMED THAT EVERYONE WHO WORKS IN GARDENS IN ENGLAND HAS A HORTICULTURAL DEGREE.

No, not at all.

ARE THE GARDENERS IN ENGLAND TREATED MORE AS ARTISTS?

I don't know what's going on in England today, but when I was there, I worked for a man who was the head gardener at Cliveden by the name of Phil Cotten, who was also responsible for at least two other gardens in the area. He was working for the National Trust, but even though he was an administrator with a huge garden and lots of staff and meetings to go to, he also worked on the grounds, as well as

being a really good tree surgeon. So, Phil would do his administrative work after the main workday. The people involved in gardens when I was being trained in horticulture were first and foremost gardeners, because administration was not considered the primary goal.

SO HOW DOES THIS MENTALITY AFFECT CHANTICLEER?

What people want when they come into the garden is to see something beautiful. And then they want to





know what it is and where they can get it. I don't provide that information at Chanticleer for very conscious reasons. This is a garden that concentrates on the aesthetics, not on the information. In fact, hardly any public garden can tell you where to get a plant, so the consumer gets the short end of the stick.

In England, however, it's much more integrated and, as you said, a cultural thing. You can walk down the street in some village in Who-Knows-Where, England and hear two old ladies walking in front of you talking about hellebores. Or else some guy getting off his motorcycle dressed in leather and asking where the penstemon nursery is. I think that's because there's not much else to do in England. The climate in England is conducive to gardening. It's amazing how many people garden there.

WHEN ONE TALKS ABOUT "OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENT" IN ENGLAND, THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT GARDENING. I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GO TO THE BEACH OR THE SWIMMING POOL IN THAT CLIMATE.

You can walk the mountains and all of that, but it's still not like hiking the Rockies. It's not as grand. So the everyday experience in England is much smaller than it is in the United States.

This is for obvious reasons, geographically, but the English are also used to a lower threshold of entertainment. I'm not sure we're used to that in America. When we go on vacation, we fly 1,500 miles and go to Disneyland. That's not a small experience. It's a big one.

THAT'S VERY TRUE. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, ISN'T THERE A LACK OF FOCUS ON AESTHETICS IN THIS COUNTRY?

Well, my goal is to raise our aesthetic expectation by making Chanticleer the most beautiful garden around. And what I'm doing is taking an already beautiful property and fine-tuning it. It's a bit like painting by numbers...essentially, the numbers are already in place and what I'm doing is sort of coloring it in. I want our visitors to be so excited, and so inspired by the beauty of this place that they leave saying, "I've got to improve my garden!" Years ago, I went to hear [noted UK gardener/author] Beth Chatto give a lecture at Swarthmore College and, when it was over, I left shaking with excitement. The next morning, I dug up half my lawn.

WHAT WAS IT ABOUT BETH CHATTO THAT SO INSPIRED YOU?

She talked about *the passion* of gardening. And I think gardeners in

America actually get bogged down in the details whether it's this euphorbia or that geranium or whatever. All you need to do is dig up your lawn and put in a ton of plants...work out the details later.

In that light, the ideal visitor to Chanticleer is someone who walks around, gets really inspired, and completely falls in love with the beauty of horticulture and plants. You can fall in love with the combinations of colors, the air, and the beauty of the place. There's also the fact that it's a sanctuary and that nobody is going to jam horticulture down their throats. We don't interpret anything. What's to interpret? *It's a garden.* And so you come away inspired to improve your life. And how do you begin to affect your life? You begin to behave differently, work outdoors more, and adjust the small things, because you often can't adjust the big things.

SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT.

Right. And I think Chanticleer actually has more to do with human beings than plants. It's a bridge between artificiality and the natural world. But let's be clear—this is not nature. We spend a lot of money on this place, whereas if it were nature, it would be a lot different. Our goal in shaping this garden has more to

do with people and to have them live better. I think that's what it's all about.

BUT BACK TO AMERICAN AND ENGLISH GARDEN DESIGN—IS THERE REALLY THAT MUCH OF A DIFFERENCE?

Well, England is a tiny country without a lot of cultural diversity. America is a huge country. We have pretty much every climate from tundra to tropics, as well as an ethnically diverse population with diverse expectations. A lot of the gardens we are used to in this area, of course, are fundamentally upper middle-class English in origin. But what is wonderful about our country is its diversity. I think we should stop looking towards England as our model and look towards other countries. Why not go to Spain and Morocco and Costa Rica and 20,000 other countries for our influences?

YOU'VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME TRAVELING AROUND THE WORLD. HOW HAS THAT INFLUENCED YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON GARDENING?

I travel as a hobby and it's really important for me to bring new influ-

ences home to the garden. Frankly, there are a lot of plants I don't think we'd be growing at Chanticleer right now if I hadn't been to Costa Rica. That's why we have three of a particular plant here, because we saw it down near the Panama border. You know, the plant world is international. So, why shouldn't the professional people be international instead of just traveling to Europe and Japan?

“All you need to do is dig up your lawn and put in a ton of plants...work out the details later.”

BUT DO YOU THINK THAT IS OCCURRING IN AMERICAN GARDENING AND, IF SO, WHERE?

During the past decade, I think it's begun to happen in people's backyards. I don't think public gardens are particularly effective in doing this. It always

strikes me how ineffective they are. I mean, 56 million people go to public gardens in America, which is a lot of visitors, but I don't think their impact is as dramatic as certain individuals in the garden universe. To be honest, I think that Martha Stewart has had a huge influence. She has alerted a huge number of people in the United States to the fact that decorating outside is acceptable. Another one is Peter Raven, who is director of the Missouri Botanical Garden. He has connected the world of science, art, horticulture, and land management into one thing. I regard him as the spokesman for botanical gardens and plant-science issues. These two people are seminal in the world of gardening right now.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT THE AMERICAN GARDENING PUBLIC, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Gardeners need to relax. This is fun and there aren't any rules. In garden books, they say you can't put this color together or use these two plants together. My advice is: *Read less, do more.* You have to get out there, bend over, sweat, and get your hands dirty. It's unimportant *what* you're doing in the garden...just do it. By doing this, you'll learn more and also begin to expect more from gardens.

ARE YOU AT PEACE IN THE GARDEN?

No. For me, it's work and it's dynamic...there's a lot of creative tension. No, it's not peaceful, not at all, which I think is common for many professional gardeners. It's a demanding, backbreaking job. That's why gardeners get so surly if you interrupt them. Gardening is like sleepwalking...if you snap them out of it, they resent it. But more importantly, gardening is an expression of the joy of living. And if one visitor picks that up from coming to Chanticleer, then I've been a success. ❖

Fran Sorin is a gardener and designer who works and lives in Bryn Mawr, PA. She is also a garden expert on the *Weekend Today* show. She can be reached at fransorin1@aol.com.

Chanticleer is located at 786 Church Road, Wayne, PA (610) 687-4163, and it is open from April 1 through October 31, 10am to 5pm, Wednesday through Saturday. Admission is free for PHS members.

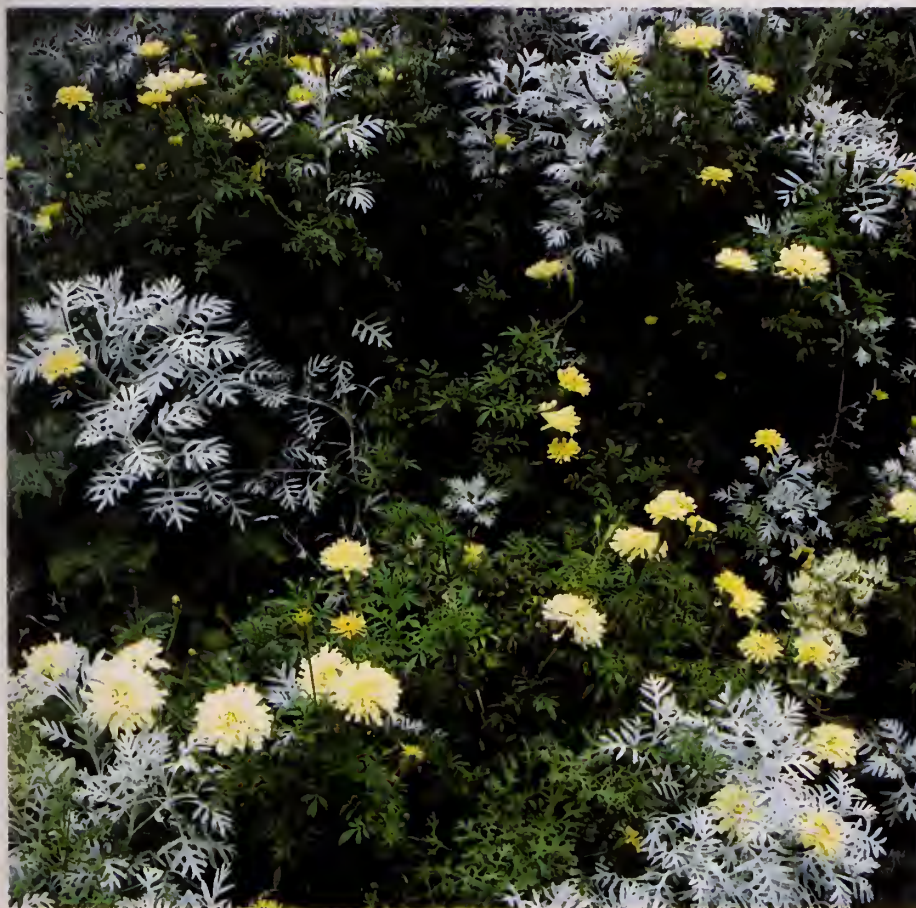



photo by Pete Proven

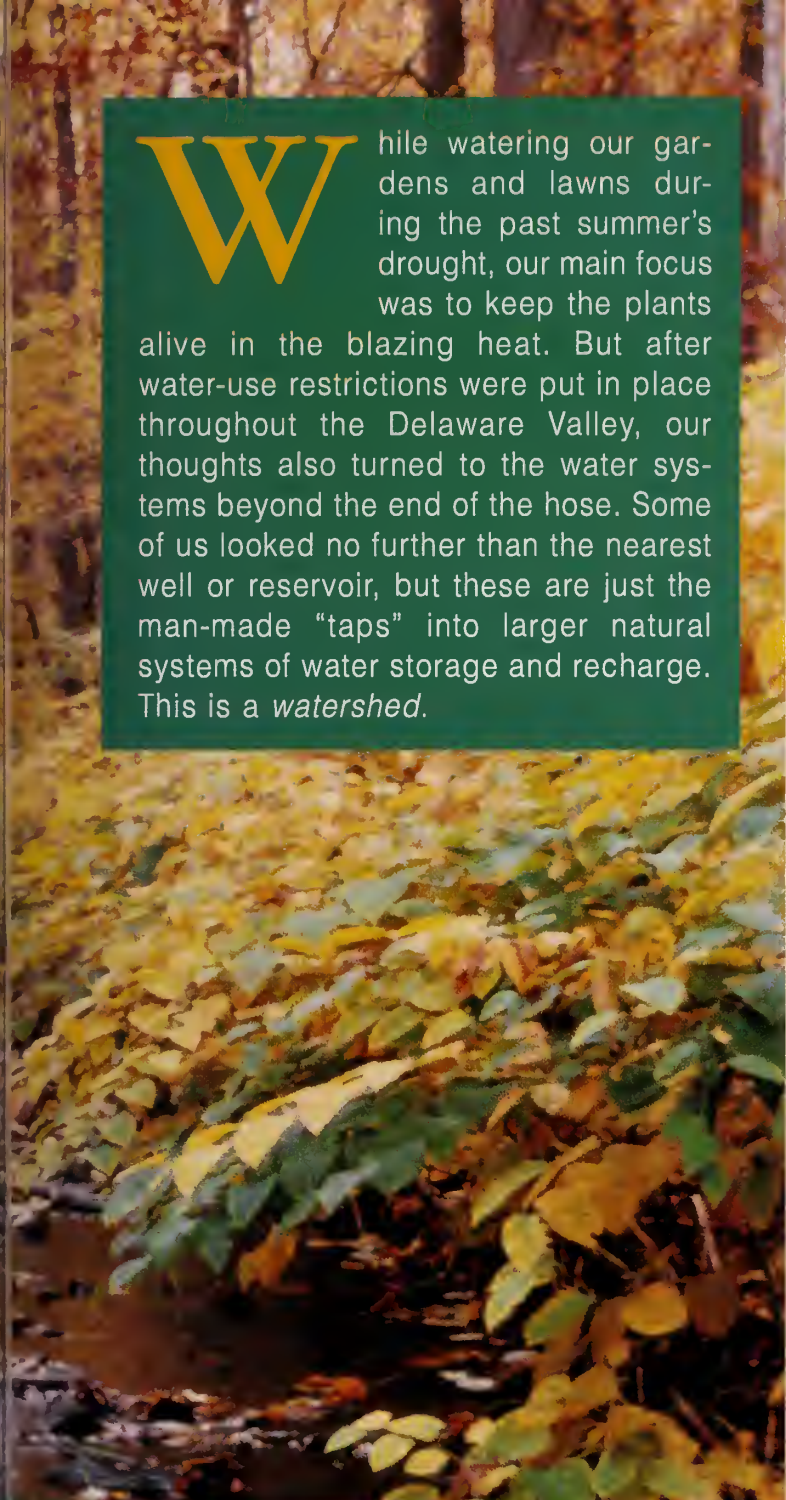


THE AMERICAN GARDEN



WATERSHED

Learn to Care For and Protect Your Local



While watering our gardens and lawns during the past summer's drought, our main focus was to keep the plants alive in the blazing heat. But after water-use restrictions were put in place throughout the Delaware Valley, our thoughts also turned to the water systems beyond the end of the hose. Some of us looked no further than the nearest well or reservoir, but these are just the man-made "taps" into larger natural systems of water storage and recharge. This is a *watershed*.

DOWN

Water Sources

by Adam Levine

All of us live in one watershed or another, defined by the creek, stream, or river into which stormwater from our property drains. Even an urban rowhouse dweller far from any above-ground waterway lives in a watershed; chances are the nearest creek runs underneath the street in a sewer pipe. A watershed for a small tributary creek can cover just a few acres, whereas the Delaware River watershed, encompassing hundreds of smaller watersheds, covers more than 12,000 square miles.

The State of Our Watersheds

Healthy watersheds replenish and purify our water supply and provide a home for many kinds of plants and animals. Unfortunately, most of the watersheds in the Delaware Valley have been badly compromised over the years. Rapid and poorly planned development, the increasing acreage of water-resistant lawns and pavement, pollution from various sources, and many other human activities all have taken their cumulative toll on water quality and quantity, as well as wildlife diversity.

"In the last century we have disrupted—more than probably any other natural system—the patterns of water to which plant and animal communities have adapted over millennia," writes Leslie Jones Sauer in *The Once and Future Forest*. "A discontinuous patchwork of deteriorating pipes, ditches, channels, impoundments, and wells has replaced and significantly dismantled the natural infrastructure of streams, wetlands and aquifers, which have been filled, drained, diverted, channeled, pumped, and dammed."

The good news is that just as human activities have degraded our watersheds, a different set of activities can help us restore them. Since most watersheds include a number of municipalities, regional planning that goes beyond a piecemeal approach is a crucial part of this recovery process. Instead of an ill-conceived patchwork of town-by-town plans, broadening the planning process to include a survey of water resources *before* going ahead with development will help protect critical areas such as wetlands and flood plains, allocate water resources according to various needs, and limit development to a level that the watershed can reasonably sustain.

On a smaller scale, individuals can also play a crucial role in watershed preservation. "Even if there is no stream in sight, your land is a piece of a watershed's puzzle," states a brochure on watershed stewardship published by the Chester County (PA) Water Resources Authority. We can get involved in the local planning process, and help local watershed groups with their stream clean-up and restoration projects. Most important, we can learn more about our own little pieces of the "puzzle," and how what we do in our gardens can have effects far beyond our property lines, for better or worse.

Watershed Basics

In an undisturbed watershed, the groundwater level and stream flow—while fluctuating according to the

season and amount of rainfall—maintain themselves within a normal range. Because the stream bank and channel change over time, they create the familiar meandering pattern that flowing water establishes even in the tiniest rivulets. The flood plain and wetlands along the stream corridor absorb the occasional high waters and support a variety of wildlife unique to such an area.

Few watersheds today are undisturbed; in general, the higher the population density, the greater the disturbance. Many areas, built up beyond the capacity of their water resources, pump more water out of underground storage reservoirs, or *aquifers*, than is flowing into them. In some places groundwater levels are so low that, instead of feeding streams as they normally do, they now suck water out of them. During dry spells in the summer, the flow of water in many streams, including the Wissahickon Creek in Philadelphia and Montgomery counties, consists mostly of the discharge from upstream sewage treatment plants.

Large areas of a watershed, including flood plains and wetlands, may also now be covered by surfaces through which water cannot penetrate: paved streets and parking lots, house and building roofs, and, surprisingly, lawns. A slightly sloping area of mown grass will deflect almost as much stormwater as pavement. Where 80% of the water in

an undisturbed watershed infiltrates into the groundwater, in many developed areas the same amount runs off on the surface, thereby decreasing the refill of groundwater supplies. This means that more stormwater now reaches streams more quickly, and in greater quantity. More runoff makes a stream more prone to flash flooding even in relatively minor storms. Filling and building on flood plains and wetlands, as well as creating embankments to channel the stream and keep it from spilling out over its banks, only serve to increase flooding downstream of these "improvements."

Higher storm flows can have many effects. They erode stream banks more quickly and deeply, disturbing native plant populations and creating openings for invasive exotic plants, such as Japanese knotweed. Erosion increases the amount of sediment in the stream, which can muddy and eventually eliminate gravelly areas in which a number of desirable fish, such as brook trout, like to feed and breed. In steep stream valleys, what would naturally be shallow tributaries can become deeply gouged gullies, further increasing sediment levels in streams and opening up more area for invasive plants.

Non-Point Pollution

Twenty or more years ago, most stream pollution came from pipes—

from factories and sewage treatment plants emitting foul effluent directly into waterways. But as those "point" pollution sources have been forced to meet stricter Federal guidelines, the majority of stream pollution, in both developed and agricultural watersheds, now comes from widely dispersed, difficult to control "non-point" sources.

During heavy rains, stormwater scours the streets and landscape and carries many non-point pollutants directly into streams, including gasoline, motor oil, lawn chemicals, and dog waste. In rural areas, runoff from farmlands can contain high levels of livestock manure, fertilizer and pesticides. Water percolating through the ground is purified somewhat, since micro-organisms in the soil break down various pollutants. But since most stormwater runs off the surface, it doesn't get a chance to benefit from this natural, biological process.

Non-point pollution is one of the most serious challenges to the health of our streams today, and is the one area where the cumulative effect of individual actions can be significant. Every time we put something on or in our land—lawn fertilizer, pesticides, motor oil dumped behind the garage or down the storm sewer—we are contributing to non-point pollution. Many storm sewers empty directly into the nearest stream, yet people still use these streetside inlets to dump motor oil, paint, solvents, and other hazardous materials.

Even when dumped "behind the garage," these substances can still make their way into groundwater supplies. Pouring them down the drain isn't the solution, either. In areas with combined sewer systems, the pipes carry both sewage and stormwater to a sewage treatment plant during dry weather. But during heavy rains, when the volume of flow is too much for the treatment plant to handle, excess stormwater along with diluted sewage is discharged directly into waterways. Most counties have "Household Hazardous Waste" collection days; contact your local Health Department for information about the next day in your area.

Lawns

"Reducing the extent of lawn is one of the easiest and most effective ways of addressing stormwater management while increasing the area of potential wildlife habitat," writes Leslie Jones Sauer. "Letting some of our lawn area

A watershed, like any park area, can sometimes be loved to death. Here, you can see erosion along the banks of the Wissahickon Creek near Valley Green, where trampling has killed off all the vegetation.



SOURCES

Left: A huge gully on a hillside beneath the Walnut Lane bridge, leading into Wissahickon Creek, created by stormwater runoff from streets and a golf course above. After a basin was built on top of the hill to detain the stormwater, this one-acre area was restored and replanted with over 800 native trees and shrubs. Work was done in 1997 by the Fairmount Park Commission's Natural Lands Restoration and Environmental Education Program. **Below:** The same hillside, now healthily replanted with trees and shrubs.



All photographs courtesy of Fairmount Park Commission's NLR&EEP

grow up into meadow allows water to percolate into the ground instead of running off. It also means that you'll be using less fertilizer and pesticides, which can wash off a lawn during heavy rains."

Here are some other lawn tips to help save our watersheds. If you are fortunate enough to live by a stream or pond, don't mow right up to the edge of the water. Leave an unmowed buffer, the wider the better, and preferably planted with trees and shrubs, which encourage even more infiltration than meadow grasses. Another way to decrease runoff is to redirect downspouts away from paved areas and onto lawns or wooded areas. Rain barrels can also be used to store water, for use on the garden between rainstorms.

The Big Picture

The main point is that each of us needs to get to know our local watershed. Janet Bowers, executive director of the Chester County Water Resources

Authority, encourages people to learn about their watershed and pay a visit to the nearest accessible stream. "Walk in it, wade in it, canoe, take pictures, or go fishing," Bowers says. "It's important that we touch the water and play in it."

"You might not want to drink it," Bowers cautions with a smile. "But we need to stay connected to streams and understand their vitality and importance. If we lose that connection and become apathetic, that's when decisions are made that will take it away from us." ❖

Adom Levine lives by Vernon Run, a tributary to Ridley Creek, in Rose Valley, Pennsylvania. Besides the sources cited, the author would like to thank Ann Smith and Mark McGuigan of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Nancy Goldenberg of the Natural Lands Restoration & Environmental Education Program, Blaine Bonhom of PHS, and Nancy Crickmon of the Department of Environmental Protection for providing background information invaluable in the preparation of this article.

The following organizations provide general information about watersheds in the Delaware Valley. They can provide maps and contacts for your local watershed organization.

Natural Lands Restoration and Environmental Education Program, Memorial Hall, P.O. Box 21601, Philadelphia, PA 19131; (215) 685-0274.

Department of Environmental Protection, Lee Park, Suite 6010, 155 North Lane, Conshohocken, PA 19428; Attn: Nancy Crickman; (610) 832-6100.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has an active watershed office for Southeastern Pennsylvania, and a good website, which includes local resources and contacts for various watershed associations: www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgt/WC/subjects/nonpoint.htm

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also has useful watershed information on its website: www.epa.gov.

Pennsylvania Environmental Council, 117 S. 17th Street, Suite 2300, Philadelphia, PA 19103; (215) 563-0250; www.libertynet.org/pecphila. PEC and its associated GreenSpace Alliance are very active in watershed management issues and open-space planning for Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Chester County Water Resources Authority, P.O. Box 2747, West Chester, PA 19380; (610) 344-5401; www.chesco.org/water.html. They recently put out a brochure for homeowners, "Watershed Stewardship, It's Up to You!," outlining various ways to become a responsible watershed steward.

For more detailed information about watershed and environmental issues, the following two books are invaluable. Both are available through the McLean Library at PHS: *The Once and Future Forest: A Guide to Forest Restoration Strategies* by Leslie Jones Sauer and *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design* by Anne Whiston Spirn.

THE AMERICAN GARDEN

THESE HISTORIC HILLS

At Washington's Crossing, the Landscape



A view of the Delaware River from Bowman's Hill. In the lower right is the Thompson-Neely House, once headquarters for General Lord Stirling who commanded colonial troops against British crossings.



Above: Sometimes called "Bouncing Bet" or "Lady by the Garden Gate", safflower (*Saponaria officinalis*) get their name because they contain saponin in their sap that lathers when mixed with water for washing.

Left: Detail from the oil painting, "Washington Crossing the Delaware" by Emmanuel Leutze. (courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Becomes A Part of Our National Heritage



by Bridget Salantri

If these hills could talk, *oh*, the stories they would tell. Indeed, the picturesque landscape of Bucks County could tell many great tales. The hills and fields are wrought by millions of years of evolution, along with the numerous rivers and streams that made it attractive for early settlement. While the area is known more for its role in the Revolutionary War, the physical qualities of the landscape also played its part in the chapter of history told at Washington Crossing Historic Park. In retrospect, these hills played a more pivotal part in our nation's birth than most people think.

In addition to being an enclosure for flowers or vegetables, a garden can be defined as a public recreational area or park and, so within this definition, Washington Crossing Historic Park is considered a garden. The land now enclosed by the Park originally served as a historic backdrop to America's quest for independence. It was here where General George Washington encamped in December of 1776, and crossed the Delaware River on Christmas Day with his army of colonial soldiers. The resulting military victory at

Trenton was America's first as a new nation.

Although the Park is dedicated to retelling this epic event, the entire story extends beyond the 500 acres of the Park and reaches into the nearby village of Taylorsville and the local countryside. In fact, the encampment sites and headquarters once occupied by Washington and his gathering forces are still standing. The rural landscape features many landmarks such as period buildings, streams, and roads. A journey through the area transports you to another, seemingly simpler, time. More significantly, the diabase-rock hills provided essential cover to the gathering patriots who were preparing to attack the Hessians (German mercenaries who were fighting for the British) in Trenton, New Jersey. One can surmise that George Washington's early training as a land surveyor taught him to use the landscape as a strategic tool and he therefore picked this area of Bucks County for the dramatic crossing.

Plants play a major role in interpreting landscapes and gardens too. In the Park, sycamore trees and river birches naturally line the riverside, while heirloom plants grow in gardens that reference different periods of garden interpretation. Near the Embarkation Point where Washington crossed the Delaware River with 2,500 men, modern formal gardens draw the public's atten-



Top: A good example of the rectilinear "bones" of a colonial garden, here seen at the Thompson-Neely House. **Bottom:** A verdant colonial-revival garden grows in front of the early 19th-century Hibbs House in the village of Taylorsville, PA.

COLONIAL PLANTS AND THEIR USES

Lungwort

(*Pulmonaria officinalis*): A hardy perennial used for treating coughs and lung complaints.

Box

(*Buxus sempervirens*): A hardy shrub used as a pain killer and to dispel parasitic worms.

Horseradish

(*Armoracia rusticana*): Native to eastern Europe, this perennial has served as food for over 3,000 years. At one time, the raw root was also used to care for boils, bronchitis, and coughs, as well as a stimulant. Large doses can be harmful, however.

Lemon balm

(*Melissa officinalis*): From the Middle East, this herbaceous perennial produces a tea which has a calming effect. It was used to relieve tiredness and headaches.

Virginia skullcap

(*Scutellaria lateriflora*): Native to North America, this hardy plant was used as a bitter tonic and remedy for hysteria, neuralgia, and rabies.

Chives

(*Allium schoenoprasum*): Originally from Europe, this herbaceous perennial's fresh leaves were used to flavor foods. The leaves are mildly antiseptic and were once said to prevent apple scabs in apples.

Madonna lily

(*Lilium candidum*): This hardy perennial's bulb contains mucilage and is slightly astringent. It was used externally on ulcers, corns, inflammations, and minor burns.

Indian tobacco

(*Lobelia inflata*): Native to North America, this hard annual was used to treat asthma and as an expectorant.

—Bridget Salantri

Portrait of an Army

By the winter of 1776, General Washington and his ragged army had experienced only defeat and despair. The War for Independence was going badly, with failure after failure. In the preceding months, Washington's campaign in New York had ended in a loss at the Battle of Long Island as the British troops outmaneuvered the Continental Army. A sense of defeat had settled around Washington as he was forced to retreat across New Jersey to Pennsylvania on December 7th and 8th.

As the harsh Pennsylvania winter set in, the morale of the American troops was at an all-time low. The soldiers were forced to deal with a lack of food and warm clothing, while Washington watched his army shrink due to desertions and expiring enlistments. Now, more than ever, a victory was desperately needed.

Washington devised a courageous plan to take the offensive and cross the Delaware River on Christmas night, and attack the Hessian garrison at Trenton, New Jersey, nine miles to the south. The original plan called for three divisions to cross the river under the cover of darkness. The boats used for the crossing were gathered earlier in the month in compliance with General Washington's orders, primarily as a defensive measure. Various types of boats had been collected, most notable the large, heavy Durham boats used to carry pig iron down the Delaware.

Fully expecting to be supported by two divisions south of Trenton, Washington assembled his own troops near McConkey's Ferry in preparation for the crossing. By 6pm, 2,400 men had begun crossing the ice-choked river. The operation was slow and difficult due to the condition of the river. There was an abrupt change in the weather forcing the men to fight their way through sleet and a blinding snowstorm. These obstacles proved to be too much for the support divisions led by Generals Cadwalader and Ewing, who did not cross at southerly points along the Delaware.

Against all odds, Washington and his men successfully completed the crossing and marched nine miles south, and attacked Trenton on the morning of December 26, achieving a resounding victory over the Hessians. By moving ahead with his bold and daring plan, General Washington re-ignited the cause of freedom and gave new life to the American Revolution.

—excerpt from "A Historic Landscape Tour,"
Washington Crossing Historic Park



Still popular today, Concord grapes were used for wine, preserves, and juices.

tion and highlight what happened here with statues and a flag. The Embarkation Point brings visitors to the edge of the Delaware River where Patriots filed into boats to make their way across the icy December waters.

Five miles north of the crossing point, the Thompson-Neely House served as the River Headquarters for General Lord Stirling and Lt. James Monroe. Here, the colonial revival-style landscape features a kitchen and herb garden filled with common colonial plants. It includes soapwort (*Saponaria*), burdock (*Arctium lappa*), lady's mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*), lungwort (*Pulmonaria officinalis*), and lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*). The work to revive the garden has been done with help from the Herb Society of America, Delaware Valley Chapter, who also donated many of the plants.

Up the road from the Thompson-Neely House is Bowman's Hill, which features small meadows and many woodland plants. Although the steep slopes and rocky terrain made farming impossible in 1776, the timber was cut regularly in this naturalized area.



Decorative and easy to grow, black-eyed Susans were a staple of the colonial garden.

AMERICAN TREES

by Gayle B. Samuels

Henry David Thoreau kept a journal for much of his life, including his celebrated time at Walden Pond. In the fall of 1855, about a year after he had completed *Walden*, Thoreau's journal entry describes him walking around his hometown of Concord, Massachusetts and coming across a mature chestnut, its nuts ripe for picking. Thoreau does not mention whether the tree grew in a garden, a field, or by the side of a road. It was the actual tree that interested him, not its setting. He was not principally a gardener or an improver of nature, but rather someone who generally preferred his flora wild and uncultivated, as he would later explain in his essay on apples, entitled "Wild Apples." This was, after all, the man who wrote those now-famous words: "....in Wildness is the preservation of the World."

But back to the chestnut. Thoreau sees the nut-laden tree and throws a large stone against the trunk to knock some nuts to the ground. And almost, it seems as soon as the stone is tossed, he regrets what he has done. The tree, he reflects, shades and feeds us and he has injured it. It has provided in the way that parents do and deserves better treatment. He concludes: "Old trees are our parents, and our parents' parents, perchance."

Old trees come before us—in some cases, such as California's nearly 5000-year-old bristlecone pines, much farther back than even our grandparents—and create the world we inherit. Every old tree tells a story about the past. Some, like parents, record pieces of our personal or family history. Others, through the science of dendrochronology (which reads the unique record of tree rings to reveal past weather patterns and events) chronicle our collective past. Trees provide the architecture of the nat-



photo by Pete Brown

ural world. They mark the seasons, fill our world with beauty, create the wood that shelters us, provide the fruits and nuts that feed us, and, along with other plants, supply the oxygen that makes complex life on earth possible.

At the same time that they release oxygen, they remove the harmful carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. They do it so successfully that the Forest Service suggests planting 50 seedlings at the birth of an infant to remove the atmospheric carbon that this child will produce in his or her lifetime. Older trees, though, do it better. The bigger the tree, the more atmospheric carbon it removes and stores.

Old trees also ornament our gardens and populate our forests. With age, they, like Thoreau's chestnut, develop into the unique markers of the places we call "home." They are models of strength, endurance, and unending generosity. And, as if all of this were not enough, they give us something to look up to. But perhaps most remarkably in this long list of admirable attributes, they do it all without being asked—just like mom.

Gayle B. Samuels is the author of a forthcoming book on historic American trees entitled *Enduring Roots: Encounters with Trees, History, and the American Landscape*, which is being published in December by Rutgers University Press.

Timbering allowed many wildflowers, including wild orchids, to grow here. The 400-foot elevation also provided General Washington's patriots with a 20-mile lookout. Again, Washington worked with the landscape to give his troops the greatest strategic advantage possible. Today, a modern-era stone tower, built in the 1930s, adds another 120 feet to the height and provides visitors with panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.

Back in Taylorsville village, many buildings dating back to the early 1800s are used to interpret a craftsman's village in post-colonial times. The landscape around the houses is simple, and a small herb garden in front of the Hibbs House identifies another formal planting of period herbs, flowers, and vegetables. Here, orris (*Iris germanica* var. *florentina*) and perennial flax (*Linum* spp.) begin the show of flowers in May. Sage (*Salvia officinalis*), thyme (*Thymus* sp.), and lavender (*Lavandula*) thrive in the well-drained river soils. The summer finds hollyhocks (*Althaea officinalis*), poppies (*Papaver somniferum*), black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia*), and purple coneflowers (*Echinacea angustifolia*) in abundance.

Certainly, there is much horticulture lovers can appreciate in this area. While the efforts of Washington and his men were heroic, the events of 1776 are inextricably tied to the surrounding countryside, where parts of the 1776 rural landscape, roadways, and original headquarters houses still exist. All current owners of these structures are keenly aware of the significant part their properties played in our nation's history, and their landscapes have been sensitively handled with this in mind. Two hundred and twenty-three years after the crossing, this entire area remains a fine place to learn about history and discover both the joys of colonial gardens and the importance of the area's geography to the birth of our nation. ❖

Bridget Salontri is the historic horticulturist for Washington Crossing Historic Park. The park is located between I-95 and the town of New Hope on 1112 River Road in Washington Crossing, PA, (215) 493-4076, www.spiritof76.com/wchp. It is open Tuesday-Saturday, 9am-5pm and Sundays, noon-5pm. There will also be landscape tours on May 6, 2000 from 10am-4pm, during the Spring Festival.

THE RESOURCEFUL GARDENER

EMBRACING THE AMERICAN SPIRIT OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

by *Lauri A. Brunton*

Gardening isn't just about digging, planting, and connecting with the earth. It's also about being resourceful and making the most of what tools and materials you have lying around. And if you look across the American landscape, who is more resourceful than the people who actually work the soil, notably gardeners and farmers. They remind us of the courageous pioneers who settled our nation and used every available resource to grow food for survival. In the Delaware Valley, there are hundreds of gardeners who share these qualities and, in this article, you'll meet four of them. Each of these individuals exemplify the very best traits of the resourceful American gardener and now share their secrets with you.

Inta Krombolz standing at the threshold to her wondrous yard.

all photos by Chris Dardaris





The Resourceful Gardener

Inta strolls past a decorative garden sculpture made of old metal parts.

Inta Krombolz

When we design our gardens and plant the perfect assortment of perennials, annuals, and shrubs, we often look for the final structure we'll need to complete the space in our mind's eye, be it a sturdy trellis, compatible garden bench, or graceful arbor. To find this special piece, many of us pull out the Yellow Pages and begin calling those garden supply stores that boast a multitude of such structures in stone, wood, clay, copper or plastic. But what if the garden supply shops didn't exist? Who would we turn to?

Inta Krombolz decided to do it herself. A West Chester, Pennsylvania gardener, Inta's resourceful ingenuity, eye for design, and skillful hands stopped her long ago from relying on stores for her structures. When landscapers cleared trees from her property a few years back, she decided to weave together leftover tulip poplar, wild cherry, and oak twigs to build a wattle fence. "Making these pieces brings human value to the garden," stresses Inta. "Because the structures are attainable from nature, they don't overwhelm us like stone or factory-made objects. In fact, people who visit my garden say they feel a renewed sense of calm."

Even if you don't have an overabundance of trees on your property, you

can always discover fallen twigs in other places—along a tree-lined street after a storm, in trash piles at local nurseries—that will supply you with the perfect materials for your own garden structures. Birch, sweetgum, beech, oak, cedar, dogwood, and a myriad of other trees or shrubs are all delightful choices. Most people rely on willow for arbors and trellises when bending is required. Their flexible twigs help create the warped, sculpted style we have become accustomed to seeing in most twig furniture.

From a simple trellis or wattle fence, to the more complicated garden gate or herb drying rack, discover how you can transform a typical garden into a fairytale haven with not much more than tree branches, twine, and imagination. Adds Inta, "I think these natural structures complete gardens. All things handmade have a unique warmth; perhaps it's the beckoning quality of wood, or the aura of old age. My wattle fences have their own earthy flavor."

Mary Seton-Corboy & Tom Seruduk

"To some, we may look like a pastoral scene in the midst of the city," remarks Mary Seton-Corboy, co-founder of Greensgrow, a new "urban agriculture" farm in North Philadelphia. "That's

because we have no heavy equipment, no fumes, and no diesel noises. Our farm is just us and some homemade hardware."

Indeed, Mary's once-vacant acre of land stands apart from the dusty concrete streets and tall buildings in this section of Philadelphia. The sound of continually trickling water within calms the mind, while the abundant green and red leaves of lettuce soften the view. But this is no pastoral scene. Indeed, without '90s technology Mary and co-founder Tom Seruduk would not be here to run their hydroponics farm. *[Hydroponics is a gardening system wherein plants are grown in nutrient-water solutions rather than in soil.]*

"We grow seven kinds of lettuce, two kinds of mustard greens and, with a grant from the EPA this year, we are also experimenting with herbs and tomatoes," declares a proud Tom. "To ensure a continuous supply of mature lettuces to harvest, we plant in succession zones. We harvest 360 to 450 pounds of mature lettuce a week, bag it, chill it, and pack it for 24-hour delivery to our customers. The following week, the next zone of lettuce is ready for harvest." Although only in their second season, the former New Jersey commercial growers are packing their gourmet lettuces into mixed greens bags and selling

to several well-known Philadelphia restaurants including the White Dog Café, London Grill, and the Philadelphia Art Alliance's Opus 251.

Mary and Tom have created an efficient and clever system in a very short time. In winter 1997, Mary learned that the Benjamin Franklin Technology Center lends money to small business ventures in technology. With a loan for start-up secured, they contacted PHS's Mike Groman—manager of Philadelphia Green's community greening efforts—about their idea to build a small agriculture business on a Philadelphia lot. Mike put them in touch with the New Kensington Community Development Corporation who found and gave them a site. In spring of 1998, they got to work.

Already impressed with results of hydroponics after experiments in New Jersey, Mary and Tom realized it would be the best growing method for this venture as well. When they learned their new farming spot was a former EPA clean-up site, their decision to employ hydroponics was finalized. Adds Mary, "If we had found reasonable soil, we might have more soil crops and less hydroponics, but we're glad it turned out this way."

Creating a hydroponics farm with limited resources was no small task and, without Mary and Tom's ambition and simple methods for constructing the model, it might have been a disaster. "It was crucial to utilize whatever resources we could find, because we wanted to make our small agricultural business a closed, simple system. That way, if someone else wants to recreate the model, he or she can. Remember, we don't have a background in engineering, electrical work, or even business," emphasized Tom. "We had to think of cheap, easy ways to replicate the traditional hydroponics model."

Rather than ordering expensive state-of-the-art materials, Mary and Tom used their imaginations to find alternatives. Vinyl rain gutters, found at any builder's supply facility, are used as the primary water and nutrient carriers. Lining the interior of the gutter, a styrofoam-support material houses the plants' roots system. The gutters also serve as the water reclamation device. Simple plywood boxes, lined with plastic, become 500 gallon reservoirs, which serve as the facility's pump station and nutrient mix-



Top: A full view of Mary and Tom's hydroponic farm and fresh lettuce crop.

Right: Tall fencing deters vandalism.

Below: Farm grown or handmade, everything on the Salad Garden's shelves were made by its owners, Sheila and Lewis McDuffie.



The Resourceful Gardener



Mary and her kids after another day's hard work.

ing center. In the beginning, the two like-minded souls even built their own "refrigerator" to store lettuce in. They did it by removing an air conditioner's thermostat and installing the whole unit into an insulated plywood box. With no thermostat to regulate temperatures, they were able to keep the air very cold. Only in their second year did they receive funds to buy an actual walk-in refrigerator. To top off their resourceful methods, Mary and Tom figured out that by tossing lettuce into a washing machine set on the rinse and spin cycle, they could quickly clean and dry bulk lettuce before weighing, bagging, and storing in the fridge.

"We are where we hoped to be when we started in 1998," says Mary. "Now we are putting out feelers for more land to expand operations. This is really only the beginning."

Sheila McDuffie

Bright red, blue, and black sports cars from New York, Indiana, and California whiz around a curving country road before screeching to a halt outside a small, well-worn barn in the farmlands of Upper Black Eddy, PA. Couples stream into a small room, scanning neatly laid-out produce, baked goods, hand-made soaps, candles, wreaths, canned goods, oils, and more. "It's not always this busy," insists Sheila McDuffie, a former New York stained glass artist turned craft artist, gardener, and market owner.

It's hard to believe her as another car bounces onto the driveway, eager faces peering through the windshield.

In 1997 Sheila McDuffie, husband Lewis (beekeeper and fine woodworker), and two young daughters, Kendra and Tegan, moved onto the small farm that now contains The Salad Garden Farm Market. The family stocks their market with herbs, soaps, oils, potpourri, candles, herbal cosmetics, mustards, vinegars, salad dressing, canned vegetables, baked goods, wool, and hand-made wicker baskets and straw brooms. What makes this market so unusual, however, is that everything they sell, they grow or make in their small farm. Only when their own produce supply runs short, do they buy in fruits and vegetables from a local farmer. "Living on a farm and learning to be self sufficient has always been our dream," says Sheila. "Making age-old crafts to sell here has helped us reach that goal and we didn't have to invest a lot of money."

The family cleaned out the small barn next to their house and designed a garden. Sheila bought a cash register at a yard sale. Lewis built all the market's wooden stands, and a neighbor gave them an old refrigerator. They bought a milking goat, sheep, chickens, and beekeeping supplies. (Lewis now has seven honey-producing hives.) With those "items" in place, they went to work, growing, harvesting, milking, gathering wool and honey, and making crafts. Then, they

opened their doors to the public.

"At first, we advertised strictly by word-of-mouth, mostly among Bucks County residents and even some New Yorkers came to our market," she notes. But after *Nouveau: A Showcase for Creative Living in the Delaware Valley* published a cover story about the Salad Garden in July 1999, tourists arrived in droves from all over the East Coast to visit the self-sustainable market.

Perhaps what draws tourists to this special place is that the McDuffie's dedication to creating a micro-enterprise of such high, organic quality is apparent in all of their stock. Exclaims Sheila, "All items—not just produce—come from the farm." Indeed their commitment to self-sufficiency, reflected in the crafts, vinegars, canned goods, produce, and baked goods they sell, lies at the heart of the market's success. By creating their own stock from scratch, they avoid expensive costs associated with buying in from outside industries. With a few key initial purchases, they have created a stunning array of marketable products. Continues Sheila, "I look outward from our regular farm products, too. I just took a series of classes on cheesemaking. Now I can bring that knowledge back to the farm."

From her seat at the wooden check-out counter, Sheila takes in the mouth-watering items filling her shelves. "Running this market has become a way of life for us. This is my hobby and my business. I'm just not interested in going out to buy chemical dyes for wool from my own sheep when I can grow zinnias myself to make natural colors. My fulfillment comes from these creative challenges. Maybe my roots as a stained glass artist make me resourceful," laughs Sheila. "I love knowing that everything begins and ends in my own backyard at the farm." ❖

The Salad Garden Farm Market, 527 Center Hill Road, Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972, (610) 847-2853. Shop Hours: Friday-Sunday, 10:00am-6:00pm. Open year-round. Greensgrow, Cumberland & Almonds Streets, Philadelphia, PA, (215) 427-2702



A HORTICULTURAL Holiday Wreath

An expert shows us how to make one at home

by Sally McCabe

Making a wreath is one of the most enjoyable activities of the pre-Christmas period. It combines horticulture, an artistic eye, and hopefully some sort of community activity, especially if you throw a wreath-making party with friends and neighbors. Here, we'll go step-by-step through the process, so you can conjure up a special holiday wreath for your home.

1 Before you can start your wreath, assemble the proper tools: sharp hand pruners, a glue gun (a low-temperature model works fine), a spool of 22-26 gauge florist's wire, 4-inch wire picks, ribbon, and a variety of frames (metal, wicker, Virginia creeper, or grapevine). Keep in mind that a flat frame will give you a flat wreath, whereas a thicker frame gives the wreath more dimension, but uses more materials. The frame needs to be strong enough to hold the weight of the greens; otherwise, you might end up with an oval wreath.

As for safety, remember that the glue gun gets hot enough to burn you, but a low-temperature model doesn't get so hot that it can set the greens smoking. Also, the pruners should have a locking mechanism; you should lock it every time you set them down—remember, they're sharp. Make sure they have bright handles so you don't lose them in the greens. Finally, keep a box of band-aids around.



photos by Kevin Nash/KSN Images

2 Get some delightful "frou-frous" to decorate your wreath. They can be either store-bought or natural. Among the natural items you can use are pine cones, dried peppers, nuts, seed-heads (here, we used poppies and thistles), and dried flowers. If they don't come with stems, wire them to picks or glue them to sticks and then insert them into the finished greens.

3 You can use many different kinds of greens. For this project we're using yew, bayberry, Leyland cypress, golden arborvitae, 'Blue Girl' holly, boxwood, and 'Silver King' artemesia. When buying greens, Douglas fir and white pine are the best buy and hold their needles for a long time. Balsam fir loses its needles quickly, but has the best smell of all the greens.

Begin by cutting your greens into hand-sized lengths (roughly 6 inches). Assemble handfuls of greens, usually about five pieces. If you're a beginner, stick with one type of green for the entire wreath and then decorate with other greens. This will give your wreath a more consistent thickness all the way around. As you develop a feel for wreathmaking, you can start varying the types of greens in each bunch and balance out the size of each leaf type—the key is to make each bunch of greens close to the same size. Make 10 bunches before you start wiring (extremely uncoordinated people should tie their bundles separately with florist's wire or a twist tie).

4 Now, to begin the actual construction, attach the end of the wire spool to a joint on the

frame tightly. Take the first bundle and lay it down horizontal to the frame (not sticking straight out). I like to look at the frame as a clock and start the first bundle at 6 o'clock. Wrap wire around the bundle three times.

5 Lay each consecutive bundle an inch or so past the previous one and wire each bundle along the way (using our clock metaphor, the first bundle sits at



6:00, the next at 5:30, the next at 5:00, and so on). When you're done, you should only see greens, not any of the frame.

6 When three-quarters done, notice how each bundle covers the mechanics (wire, stems, frame) of the previous one.

7 As we finish off attaching the greens, I like to separately wire the last bundle because it's

easier to jam it into the last space on the frame. Then I wire it in loosely, flip the wreath over to the back, and tie the end of the wire off to the frame. *Never cut the wire with your pruners. Always use wire cutters; otherwise, you'll ruin the pruners.*

Now, turn the wreath back to the front and examine it for holes and inconsistencies. Fill these in with slightly longer branches so you can work them into one of the other bundles. If you've done everything right, you should be able to toss your wreath in the air like a pizza without pieces flying off. Beginners, don't try this at home.

8 Time to decorate! Cut a 6-inch loop of florist's wire, bend it like a hairpin, and wrap the loop around the base of pine cone and twist. Now it's time to attach it.

9 Add your decorative greens and frou-frous according to taste. (Sally adds wryly, "Taste is everything.")

10 Don't overload the wreath with decoration or else the lovely greens that you worked so hard to attach will be buried under frills.

11 Attach the bow of your choice...or don't. It's up to you.

12 The finished project and its happy creator. Note the hot-pepper earrings!

13 This simple technique of assembling and wiring bundles works for any live or dried material. Once you know the system, you can make wreaths out of anything. This one is made from eucalyptus, statice, and dried miniature roses. ❖

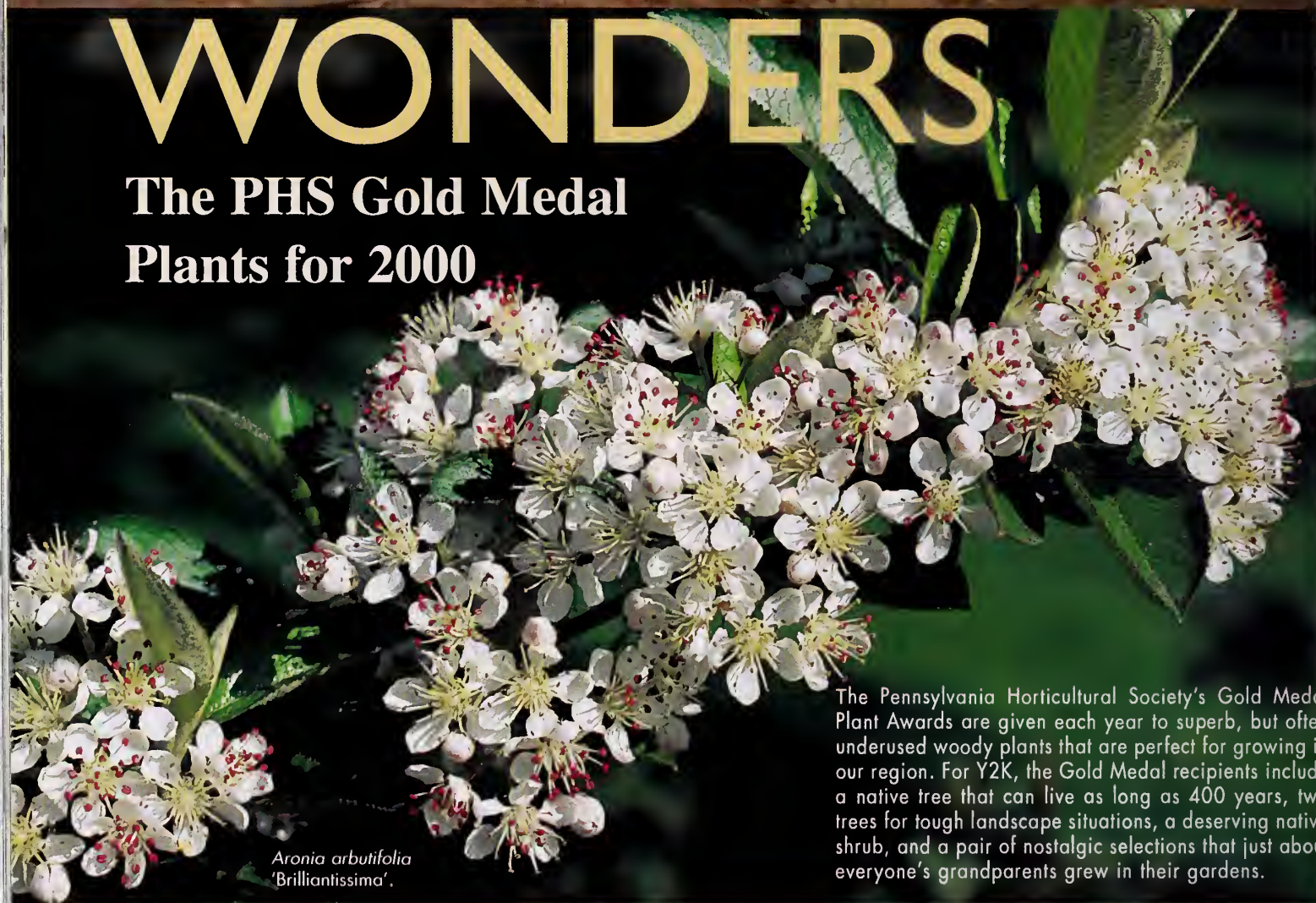


Sally McCabe is outreach coordinator at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and a long-time contributor to *Green Scene*.



WOODY WONDERS

The PHS Gold Medal Plants for 2000



Aronia arbutifolia
'Brilliantissima'.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Plant Awards are given each year to superb, but often underused woody plants that are perfect for growing in our region. For Y2K, the Gold Medal recipients include a native tree that can live as long as 400 years, two trees for tough landscape situations, a deserving native shrub, and a pair of nostalgic selections that just about everyone's grandparents grew in their gardens.

by Richard L. Bitner

White Oak (*Quercus alba*) Zones 3-9

Gold Medal committee member and garden designer William H. Frederick, Jr., calls *Quercus alba* "the aristocrat of the oaks" and, of the many types of oaks, it is surely one of the most handsome. The tree grows naturally from Maine to Florida and west to Minnesota and Texas. At maturity it has a short, sturdy trunk and an upright-rounded

habit with wide-spreading branches. In the first 10 to 12 years of growth it will reach 12-15 feet; then it grows slowly to 50-80 feet with a canopy spread of 100 feet. These outspreading limbs are not dangerous, however. The wood is very hard and strong, and it is rare for a white oak limb to come down in an ice or wind storm. The fall color varies from brown to a rich red to wine color and lasts for a long period of time.

Quercus alba prefers acid soils and full sun. The pioneers looked for the white oak as an indication of the best places to build their homes, since it was known that its roots go deep and enjoy rich soil. White oak is not accepting of flooding or ozone, but is resistant to salt. It is also not tolerant of compaction or grade change. For this reason, native trees gradually decline and die when people encroach, and build roads and



houses among white-oak timber.

The production of white oaks in the nursery trade is difficult, largely because of its deep taproot. Because of this, *Quercus alba* should be transplanted balled and burlapped as a small tree. Nurseryman Tom Dilatush admits that white oaks tend to cost the homeowner more per foot in height because of their slow growth, but considers it a much better species than the more commonly available and cheaper pin oak and red oak.

White oaks begin to produce acorns at about 20 years and will produce prolific crops every 4 to 10 years thereafter. Some observers attribute the abundance of wildlife in country gardens this year to the huge acorn crop of the previous year. The oak's acorn—which is botanically a nut—has a very high food value and is relished by songbirds, upland ground birds, small mammals, and hoofed browsers. White oak acorns are the choice food of blue jays, ruffed grouse, brown thrashers and wild turkeys. *Quercus alba* is wind pollinated and its acorns will sprout and begin to germinate as soon as they fall into the appropriate medium.

Although some pests have been listed for the white oak, it remains a durable, long-lived tree. As it is both strong and beautiful, there are more uses for white oak wood than any other timber in the world. It's used to make ships, floors,

Left: *Quercus alba*. **Right:** *Acer buergerianum*.
Inset: A commemorative plaque signifying the age of this venerable oak.

paneling, and furniture because of its beautiful grain. The finest whiskeys and wines are also matured in white-oak barrels. Indeed, many historic deeds took place near white oaks, and they survive as witnesses to these events.

Trident Maple (*Acer buergerianum*) Zones 5-9

Those gardeners looking for a choice medium-sized tree might consider *Acer buergerianum*. This lovely maple is a native of China, transplants readily (balled and burlapped in early spring), and grows slowly to 20-30 feet with an equal-sized spread. While it has a tendency toward multiple and low branching, the tree can be trained to a single stem.

Its three-lobed leaves are often rich bronze to purple when they emerge in the spring and become a glossy dark green. The foliage turns yellow, orange, and red in late October or early November, coloring later than many maples. Its parallel-winged seedpods mature in the fall, turn light brown, and drop. The trident maple may produce weedy seedlings, but they are never

pesky like the Norway maple's. It is a low-maintenance tree, as well, and grass grows readily under its light shade.

The trident maple has no disease or insect problems, although it may suffer breakage in severe ice and snow storms, according to Joe Gray of Hines Nursery, who adds that he has grown it in an open field to salable nursery size without sun scorch. However, it should be planted in good soil, and the soil should be kept reasonably moist around the roots during the few years after transplanting. After that, trident maple should be able to take care of itself except during periods of unusually dry weather when an occasional thorough watering may be needed.

With maturity the trunks become gray-brown-orange and develop an exfoliating, platy, scaly character. This pretty bark adds winter interest for our gardens. In all, *Acer buergerianum* is a very handsome, small patio or lawn tree and should be used more extensively. It is also a good species for bonsai.

Parrotia (*Parrotia persica*) Zones 4-8

Parrotia is a tree that is often hard to identify. It is a member of the *Hamamelidaceae* family and has foliage similar to its cousins, witch hazel and *Fothergilla*. It is a small, single-or multi-stemmed tree or multi-stemmed shrub with an oval-rounded head of upright,



Left: *Parrotia persica*. **Right:** *Aronia arbutifolia* 'Brilliantissima'.

ascending branches. It will grow 10 feet over six to eight years to a height of 20-40 feet and a spread of 15-30 feet. In a century it will grow to 60 x 60 feet. Parrotia can be slow to establish, but grows faster with adequate watering and well-drained, loamy, and slightly acid soil. It will tolerate chalky soils and favors full sun, but will grow in light shade.

The parrotia's leaves are reddish purple when unfolding in the spring and change to a shiny emerald green color during summer. In late fall the leaves turn a dramatic yellow to pumpkin-orange to scarlet. The color from mid-November into early December is about the latest to make its appearance among deciduous trees. Most people miss the flowers that appear before the leaves in February to April. They are crimson-maroon stamens about 1/2-inch long.

Phil Normandy—Plant Collections Manager at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, Maryland—considers parrotia one of the unsung plants for stress tolerance, because it withstands drought, heat, wind, and cold: "It never misses a beat even when planted in traffic islands and even did well in the heat of 1999." He adds, "I think of parrotia as the horticultural equivalent of a fine wine—it's a bit green and ordinary at first, but gets so much better with age. The mature tree has incredible trunk musculature, fabulous patches of cream bark exposed by peeling, and an upright vase-shaped crowded crown that imposes the feeling of solidity. Another plant for the long haul."

Parrotias should be expertly dug with a large root ball, since poorly dug ones

may suffer transplant shock. This native of Iran is propagated from cuttings taken in early summer and treated with rooting promoter and then rooted under mist. Cuttings should be left in medium through one winter and potted during next season's new growth. *Parrotia persica* is a perfect choice for a specimen tree in small gardens or a tough street tree in restricted spaces, plus it has the added characteristic of its marvelous exfoliating bark.

Red Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia* 'Brilliantissima') Zones 4-9

Aronia is a favorite shrub of Jeff Lynch, the nursery manager and plant propagator at Longwood Gardens. "'Brilliantissima' is a 'do-er,'" he says. "It provides interest in the garden during just about every season." This plant is native from Massachusetts to Florida and west to Minnesota. It's at its best in the fall when its leaves turn brilliant scarlet and in the winter when its branches are covered with glossy red fruit. In the spring, it has delicate white to pinkish flowers and in the summer dark, glossy green foliage.

Aronia will grow 5-10 feet tall with a 3-5 foot spread. It is multi-stemmed and distinctly upright. It suckers and forms a colony over time. It has a finely fibrous root system and transplants well. It will tolerate both wet and dry soils and is adapted to many soil types, even poor soil. Although the best fruit production occurs in full sun, it will grow in half shade. Its natural habitat is in boggy places and low pinelands; it grows along creek banks and moist rocky

ledges. Thus it is very tolerant of flooding and is resistant to salt. Despite being part of the rose family, it suffers no serious disease or insect damage. The bright red fruits (*pomes*) cover the plant from September through November and well into January. The common name is "chokeberry" because of the astringent taste. The birds don't touch it until late winter when it is a preferred food of ruffed grouse, bobwhites, brown thrashers, cedar waxwings, and eastern meadowlarks.

Red chokeberry is especially effective when it is planted en masse. It does tend to get leggy as it matures because the foliage is lost from the lower part of the plant, providing opportunities for interplanting. It probably should not be placed at the edge of a flower or vegetable garden as its root sprouts may slowly creep into the territory of neighboring plants. Notwithstanding, *Aronia arbutifolia* 'Brilliantissima' is a selection of native shrub that is reliable and tolerant of wet conditions and provides a long-lasting display of abundant red fruit.

Meyer Lilac (*Syringa meyeri* 'Palibin') Zones 3-7

Everyone loves lilacs. And there is no denying the common lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) has large, fragrant flowers whose intense fragrance is wonderful in bouquets during the two weeks the shrub is flowering. What no one likes about the common lilac is that the plant has to be pruned and sprayed and fussed over to make it presentable enough to plant in a prominent location in the yard. Since it looks so sad from the mildew affect-



Left: *Syringa meyeri* 'Palibin'. **Right:** *Weigela florida* 'Alexandra' Wine and Roses™.

photo by Tim Wood

ing its leaves during most of the growing season, it usually ends up being replanted in an out-of-the-way place where it won't be looked at too closely.

Gold Medal selection *Syringa meyeri* does not manifest these problems. It is a small (4 to 8 feet high by 4 feet wide), dense, and mounded shrub with excellent clean branch structure. It has a uniform, pristine outline in summer and winter. It has a medium fine texture in leaf because of its small, dark green leaves that never suffer from mildew. There is no fall color change. This native of northern China will start to flower when it's about one foot high. Its violet-purple, fragrant flowers are densely packed in 4 inches long and 2-1/2 inch wide panicles in May before the leaves are fully developed, and stay in bloom for more than two weeks. The flowers cover the entire plant and are spectacular.

It will display its neat, rounded habit in the garden for years with little or no maintenance. Bill Frederick cuts his mass planting back to the ground every four years after flowering. He likes *Syringa meyeri* because "it blooms exactly with *Wisteria floribunda* and the flowers are a good blending color for anywhere in the garden."

Syringa meyeri is a lilac that is fragrant and low-maintenance, and one that should be grown by more gardeners. It can be used in a large lilac "island" on the lawn, as a lilac border beside the railing at the edge of a deck, or in the shrub border with an evergreen background. Plant it in an open, sunny location in good soil and enjoy the nostalgia.

Weigela (*Weigela florida* 'Alexandra' Wine and Roses™) Zones 4-8

Weigela is another old-fashioned shrub that evokes images of "...grand-

mother's front yard and a white picket fence draped with honeysuckle," according to Kim Tripp, director of the Botanic Garden of Smith College. This favorite of many generations was imported in the Victorian era from the plant explorations of the 1800s to Japan. Because of its pretty flowers and reliability, it is still found on large old properties. It has lost favor with today's gardeners because of its informal habit and relaxed outline and a texture that is unattractive in winter. But *Weigela* is pest- and disease-free and very tolerant of pollution and urban conditions, causing many new cultivars to be introduced in recent years.

None equals the Gold Medal *Weigela* Wine and Roses. It is a compact shrub 4-5 feet high and wide with dark burgundy-purple leaves all season and hot rose-pink flowers in May and June on last year's branches. Like its relatives, it will grow in almost any location but prefers moist, well-drained soils. It will grow in part shade, but the richest burgundy color develops in full sun. The plant is easily propagated from cuttings, and hummingbirds adore the flowers. ❖

Richard L. Bitner is a physician, a teaching assistant at Longwood Gardens, and an instructor at the school of the Barnes Arboretum. He gardens in Lancaster County.

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- 2) Plants must be hardy from New York City to Washington, D.C.
- 3) A program of propagation must be under way

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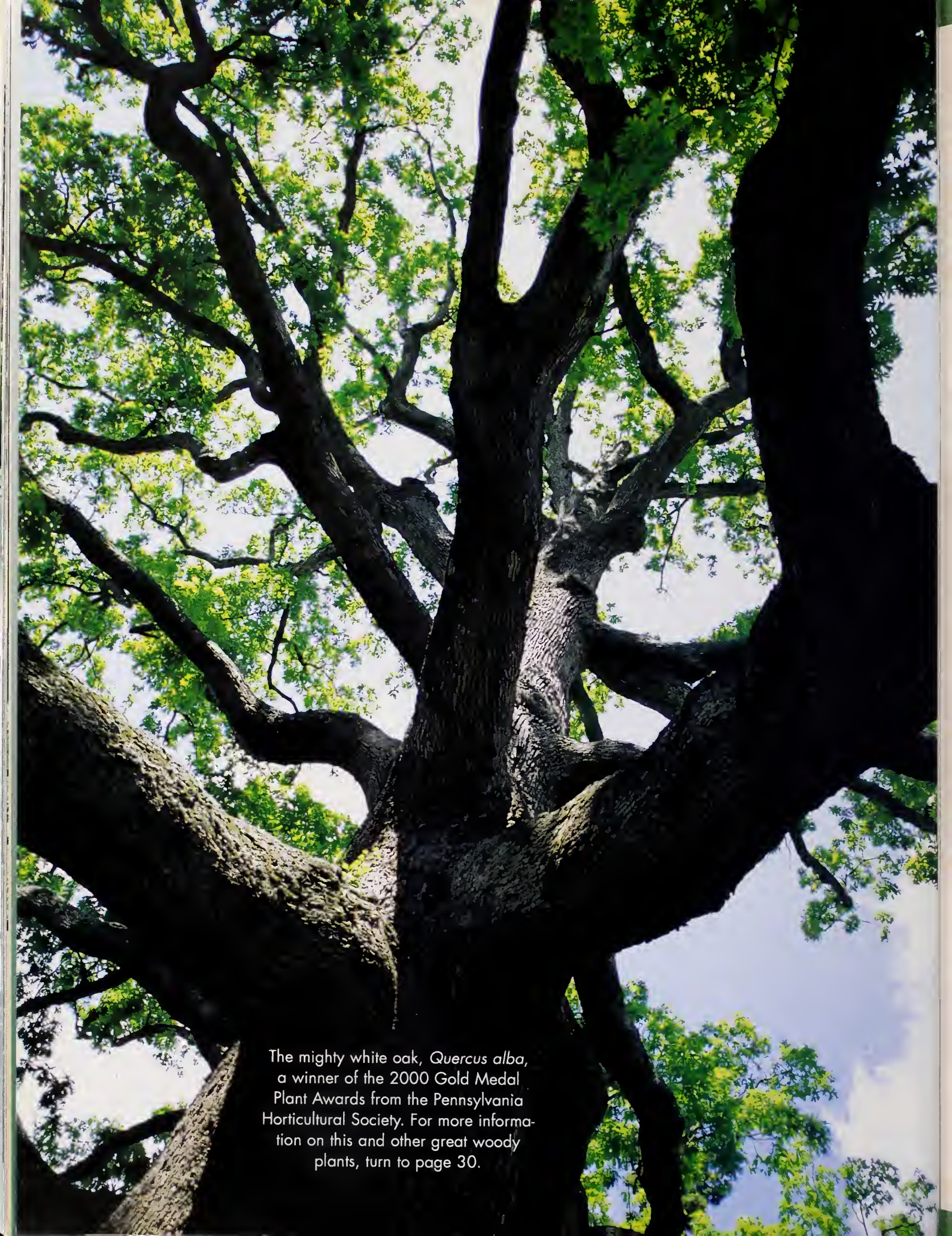
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GREEN scene

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Cathedral Village President, Bill Owens, recently announced the development of an extensive Horticultural Program. The focal point will be a large greenhouse and headhouse, currently under construction.

The newly appointed Director of the Program is Horticulturist, Margaret (Peggy) Schofield. As Director, Peggy will also be responsible for the gardens and landscape design of the entire Cathedral Village campus.

Bill feels very strongly that "the key to the success of the new greenhouse is to have a strong Program directed by a person with knowledge, experience and a caring attitude," and he believes that Peggy possesses all of those attributes. She will be assisted by Mrs. E. Perot Walker who is the Cathedral Village resident liaison for the Program.

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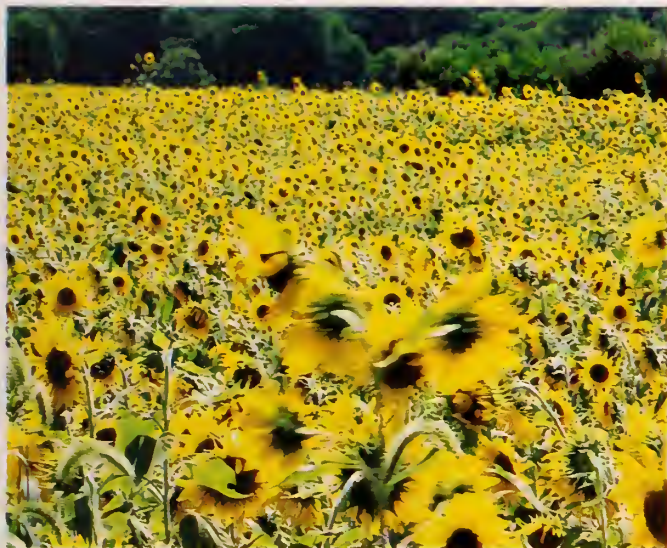
C O N T E N T S

6. The Potting Shed

10. The Medieval Garden

By Pamela D. Jacobsen

What did gardens look like nearly 1,000 years ago? Step back through the centuries and take a fascinating look at medieval gardening. Also, learn how to build your own garden from the Middle Ages.



18. A Gardener's Wisdom

By Fran Sorin

Meet Jock Christie, head gardener of a vast private estate in Chester County, PA. Here, the perennial expert gives us some simple, but timeless tips to help make our flower beds produce more vibrant blooms and combinations of color.

24. New Flowers for 2000

By Dorothy Noble

See a sampling of next year's exciting plant introductions.

30. Windows on the World

By Claire Sauyers

Get an "insider's look" on how to design beds and landscape features that take advantage of special window views from your home. There are fresh angles of beauty from within that are just waiting for your creative touch.

36. Classified Ads



Cover: Winter scene shot by Harry Kalish
Digital imaging by Scott Hoisington

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Letter From the Editor

of other fresh edibles all winter long. (For more on this fascinating subject, read Eliot Coleman's guide, *The Winter-Harvest Manual*, available in the PHS McLean Library.)

Winter is also a time for planning next year's garden, much of which has been simplified by, dare I say, computers. While computers and gardening may seem strange bedmates, there are a variety of new software programs for winter gardeners to play with, often containing useful landscape-design tools, plant photos, and reference material. Many interesting CD-ROMs are available from the McLean Library.

Another fine way to exercise your garden instincts through the frigid months is through artwork. Several garden folk I know have taken up pen and paintbrush, creating botanical and still-life images of their favorite flowers during the off-season. A blank canvas, a box of oil paints, and the stirring sounds of Puccini in the background seems like a perfect way for the creative gardener to spend a blustery Saturday in February.

One of my favorite winter-gardening outlets is simply walking outdoors. While some may hole up for the cold months, I find it to be a superb time to take a romp through the woods or down a nearby street. In my woodsy corner of the 'burbs, the winter landscape is a beautiful sight to observe, seeming like an old photograph hand-tinted with warm, earthy colors. There's vivid color here and there, from the red berries of American holly (*Ilex opaca*) and winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*) to the tangled, brilliant purple stalks of blackcap raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*). And, of course, there's nothing like walking at night during a light snowfall. Given the right conditions, my neighborhood can positively glow under a blanket of

snow, making evening walks all the more inviting. The silence is simply breathtaking.

Working with this happy mindset, winter is anything

but "down time" for the serious gardener. There is plenty to keep us busy, satisfied, and mentally engaged with the wider world of gardening during these cold months. With much to do and much to look forward to, winter can easily become a high-point of the gardener's year.



As you peruse this issue of *Green Scene*, you will notice something very new and different: *display ads*. Starting with this issue, display advertisements will become a permanent part of the magazine. While we've run smaller "classified" ads for many years, these larger display ads will allow our advertisers to provide more gardening information to our readers. More than that, these ads allow us to continue bringing you the same wonderful gardening stories, expert horticultural information, and great photography that everyone has come to expect from *Green Scene*.

Pete Prown
greenscene@pennhort.org

Much has been written about the psyche of the gardener in winter. Amusing anecdotes abound of gardeners gazing out frosty windows, longing for spring and devouring every seed catalog in sight. Yet as I've found over the years, there are more enjoyable ways for gardeners to survive the winter than just sitting and pining. Instead, one can be an active garden participant, even during the worst days January and February can throw at you.

The key to finding winter joy as a gardener is to find some off-season activity to balance our spring and summer efforts. For many folks, this can be simply gardening indoors, even if you don't have a greenhouse. Houseplants can often turn springtime diggers into full-scale indoor hobbyists, from the always-hopeful amaryllis enthusiast ("Please bloom this year...*please!*") to the experts who enter their virtuoso-caliber containers in the

The Winter Gardener

Competitive Classes at the Philadelphia Flower Show each March. It's one thing to keep a humble jade plant or philodendron in the living room; it's another to nurture the specimens of rare and exotic plants that turn up at the Show.

There is also the optimistic gardener who plants flats of seeds from January through April, setting them out by a sunny window or under growing lights with the hope of launching next fall's bountiful harvest. These tabletop gardeners patiently observe their seedlings as they miraculously erupt out of the soil-free mix and turn into thriving plants. Like newborn babes, these tiny shoots of tomatoes, lettuces, and zinnias have to be watched and coddled, making sure they get enough light, water, and heat, but not so much as to injure them. It's an extremely rewarding process. In fact, I happily started my plants in this manner for many years, until family members complained that there was little room on the dining room table for, well, *dining*. Thus banished to less conducive parts of the house, my seedling farm has been greatly reduced in recent years. But like General MacArthur, I shall return.

The true winter warriors of the horticultural world are those who simply keep on gardening outdoors all year round. Marching out to their unheated coldframes or plastic-covered greenhouses, the four-season veggie specialist bears sleet, cold rain, and snow to harvest crops of spinach, chard, scallions, salad greens, kohlrabi, kale, broccoli raab, pak-choi, and dozens



The Potting Shed

photos courtesy of Park Seed Co.



Winter Winners

If you're looking for a little gentle color to brighten your winter woes, here are two hellebores to cheer you up. Pictured below is the traditional favorite *Helleborus niger*, commonly called the "Christmas Rose." Easy to grow and early to bloom, this hellebore grows in Zones 3-8 and will bloom at Christmas in milder areas. It has charming 1-1/2 inch blossoms that open up white and turn to a light pink. It grows 10-12 inches high and should be planted in a shady spot with well-composted soil.

Another wintry wonder is *Helleborus ori-*

entalis Royal Heritage (pictured above). This tough, shade-loving "Lenten Rose" grows in Zones 4-9, preferably in good, loamy soil. The Royal Heritage hybrid puts forth large 2-inch blooms in a variety of hues, from white and pale pink to deep rose and near chocolate. Some blossoms are even slightly greenish or a soft yellow. It also boasts bold, healthy foliage that will last throughout the season in a nice, compact form. Once established (about 1-2 years), Royal Heritage should prove a worthy addition to your winter landscape.

—Pete Prown

Sources:

Fort Washington Garden Mart, 488 Bethlehem Pike, Fort Washington, PA, (215) 646-3336

Mostardi's, 4033, West Chester Pike, Newtown Square, PA, (610) 356-0835, www.mostardi.com

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GARDEN NET

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE. A donut on a stick? No, it's the new **Henningsen CircleHoe**, which has a circular loop-shaped blade instead of a typical square or triangular one. The reason behind its round shape, its creator suggests, is that conventional blades cut roots under the soil and thereby diminish crop yields. The CircleHoe, however, can just skim below the surface, removing unwanted weeds, but leaving your plant's roots intact and healthy. For more info, contact the company at (800) 735-4815, www.circlehoe.com.



SEED-STARTING TIP. If the meek **seedlings** on your sunny windowsill start to die, they're getting too much water. This overabundance of water can promote a deadly fungus, so water them only briefly, setting the flat, pot, or tray in a pan of water. A quick drink will do the trick. Also, if you start your seeds with clear plastic wrap over the top of the container, poke a few air slots on top with a sharp pencil or knife. When the seeds germinate, remove the plastic wrap completely, so the seedlings can get proper airflow. Lack of air, along with excessive water, can also promote fungus.

EARTHLY WINE. Attention, oenophiles: Author and famed French winemaker Nicolas Joly has just published **Wine from Sky to Earth** (Acres U.S.A., 168pp, \$24), a softcover book describing his technique of "biodynamic" grape growing. Biodynamics is an all-organic method of farming that not only avoids chemicals and fungicides, but also looks at other natural factors, such as lunar and solar

continued



Dots, Dashes, Stripes 'n' Splashes

Confessions of a Variegated Plant Lover

by Stephanie Cohen

Very early in my horticultural career, I began to get the "variegated bug." This minor obsession was not very mainstream 25 years ago, except for the *Hosta* fanatics and they've always been addicted. Whenever I bought a variegated plant, I would hide it surreptitiously in a box or bag, almost as though I had purchased an X-rated video in a plain brown wrapper. It felt positively sinful.

It didn't matter what plant it was or what kind of variegation: a dot here, a splotch there, or just a different edge—nothing escaped my variegated glance. Catalogs of strange and unusual plants began arriving in late winter and I gleefully began to leaf through each one of them. Local garden centers at this point only sold *Hosta* and very few other variegated delights. Slowly but surely, variegated became mainstream. As it did, I literally "came out of the potting shed" and admitted my sublime addiction. It was now a race to see how many new additions I could cram into the garden. I began to expand my plant palette—annuals, vines, and shrubs now moved into my garden. Even variegated trees began to whisper sweet nothings into my ear: "Buy Me!" they cooed. Mundane plants such as variegated lily-of-the-valley, sorrel, comfrey, and sage began to appear and multiply. Even weeds such as hawkweed held my fascination.

I began the next phase by jumping wholeheartedly into the purple-and-chartreuse mania. People have even complained that the sheer volume of these combinations not only hurt their eyes, but gave them a migraine headache. Trading began to be a new game, too. Many of the plants I lusted for were being produced on the West Coast, yet I lived in the East. Needless to say, the shipping became prohibitive—sometimes higher than the cost of the plants. Did I care? *Nope*.

I even began to take extra jobs to feed my habit, as the influx of new variegated plants was growing exponentially. *Pulmonaria*, *Tiarella*, *Heuchera*, x *Heucherella*, *Tricyrtis*, *Salvia* and *Geranium* arrived in my garden with no end in sight. Herbs by the scores joined in the push and shove for their own space. *Origanum*, *Lavandula*, *Canna*, *Thymus*...what was next? Soon *Hydrangea*, *Hypericum*, *Cercis*, *Cornus*, *Weigela*, *Buddleja*, and *Daphne* had me drooling. I was utterly shameless—I loved each and every new shrub and small tree. A 20-foot, variegated *Pinus wallibiana* became my big birthday present.

As a New Year's resolution this past January, I promised I would slow down or give up my magnificent obsession. But during the winter doldrums, catalogs started to arrive and I began to salivate. Soon, in the wee hours of the morning, I would still be reading and checking plants. As my eyelids got heavy and I finally nodded off to sleep, visions of plants—not sugarplums—danced in my head. I envisioned those wonderful dots, dashes, stripes, and splashes. New colors abounded, and the Technicolor tints and hues were marvelous in my dreams.

As you can imagine, resolutions were made to be broken. I might try again next year, but this obsession has no known cure. Maybe there's a 12-step program for variegated junkies, but I may be too far gone for help. Indeed, I did once covet a variegated pokeweed.

Stephanie Cohen is a well-known horticultural teacher and lecturer who specializes in perennials. She is also Mid-Atlantic representative to the Perennial Plant Association (www.perennialplant.org).



cycles, astronomy, and microscopic life forms in the soil. So far, it's working—Joly's Coulée de Serrant vineyard in the Savennières district is considered one of the Loire Valley's finest examples of Chenin blanc white wine.

WINTER PROTECTION. For those worried about protecting your shrubs and roses during the rough winter season, there's the **Bush Jacket**. Unlike some conventional covers, the Bush Jacket is a woven fabric that lets your plant get air and water. It is also covered in an attractive leaf pattern, so you don't have to look at ugly cones or burlap all winter. Use it for your roses, rhododendrons, azaleas, and evergreens. For more info, call (800) 207-3768, www.bushjacket.com.

FLOWER POWER. The Espoma Company has released a new garden fertilizer called **Flower-Tone**. Rich in natural organics, Flower-Tone sports lower nitrogen levels and a higher degree of phosphorous and potassium (3-5-7) to promote abundant, long-lasting blooms. It also has a lower salt level, which is intended to reduce the chance of burning tender young annuals. (www.espoma.com)

Let's Hear From You!

What do you think of this issue of *Green Scene*? And which stories did you like...and which ones didn't tickle your fancy? Lend us your compliments, critiques, or complaints, all of which will help us create a better magazine for you.

Send your thoughts to us at the following address: Green Scene Magazine, P.O. Box 7780-1839, Philadelphia, PA 19182-1642. You can also email us at: greenscene@pennhort.org

A Walk through Toronto's Cabbagetown

The name "Toronto" usually brings to mind frigid Canadian snowstorms and winters that last for ten months ("followed by two months of lousy skating," as the local joke goes). But if you visit during the fair months of summer, you'll be treated to dozens of charming gardens. In addition to the Bach-inspired Music Garden on Lake Ontario and nearby Royal Botanic Gardens, Toronto's downtown is also home to many well-maintained parks and dazzling street plantings. One of the finer gems open to the public is the Allan Gardens Conservatory, located near the residential district known as Cabbagetown (so named for the 19th-century Irish immigrants who planted their vegetables in the front yard). This diminutive, Victorian conservatory is brimming with thousands of verdant tropical plants, all pristinely maintained. Better yet, it's free to one and all.

If you have comfortable shoes, take a 15-minute walk through Cabbagetown and admire its old brick townhouses and colorful private gardens. On the other end of this community is another free attraction, Riverdale Farms, which is a petting zoo and garden that both kids and adults will enjoy. Even if farm animals aren't your thing, the lush plantings of annuals and perennials surely will be. And across the street is the Necropolis, a scenic old cemetery featuring a small, but exquisite neo-Gothic chapel. Finally, there are trails along the nearby Don River for hiking and more nature-watching.

So who says Toronto is all about snow, ice, and sleet? With its mild summers and large population of transplanted Britons, one shouldn't be surprised to discover the city's abundant garden spots.

—Pete Prown



Photo by Pete Prown

Flower Show Sneak Preview!

"Gardens for the New Millennium," the theme for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show, will bedazzle visitors with waves of futuristic beauty. The Show will evoke a new era where it is possible to live and work in a city, and still be connected to the sylvan beauty of our natural planet.

As part of the Central Feature, 25 years of Philadelphia Green—the acclaimed urban-greening program of PHS—will be celebrated in a floral habitat of designed beauty and integrated function. Built with technological and horticultural principles that are in place today, a vintage Philadelphia will be transformed into a blooming continuum 100 years in the future with ingenious combinations of gardens, community, science and culture.

Classic urban townhouses—each presenting a different and

unique approach to 22nd-century living—will face a retail center in this "green" community of the future. One home will present a sculpture garden and fountain, while fruit trees and a wine vat sit enticingly next door. Down the street are backyard ponds, an exercise center, and a garden of exotic and organic vegetables. The entire community is further enhanced with windmills and solar panels that generate electricity, a high-speed rail line whooshing overhead, and a "cloning" store.

The 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show will take place March 5-12 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center (12th & Arch Streets) in Philadelphia.

For more information about The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Flower Show, visit at www.philafloowershow.com or call (215) 988-8800.

—Steve Maurer

ASK A GARDENER



by Hotline Staff

I was hoping to prevail upon your noted green thumb. We have a tropical plant called a *Spathiphyllum* that has been doing beautifully. But ever since the heat went on in our house, it has really been drooping. Do you know of any ways to protect tropical plants like this through the winter?

Margaret C., via the Internet

Spathiphyllum prefers daytime temperatures between 80-85°F and night temperatures between 62-65°F. It's a good plant for indoor use as it will survive in low-light conditions or diffused sunlight. It prefers even moisture, but should not be constantly wet. Once your heat is switched on, this plant will benefit from being placed on a pebble tray with some water in the bottom, but do not put the base of the pot directly in water. This will help maintain a good humidity level. Between March and September, it benefits from weekly fertilizing with low-concentration fertilizer.

I noticed artificial boulders in some exhibits at the Philadelphia Flower Show last year. Where can I buy some?

Anonymous, via the Internet

Some rocks that had flowers planted in them were probably what are called "feather rocks" or "lava rocks" (made from volcanic pumice). You can usually find them at larger garden centers. Evidently, not all of these are weather-proof. You might want to check with J. Franklin Styer Nurseries in Concordville, PA, (610) 459-2400.

Some of the rocks in the Waldor Orchid exhibit were made of papier-mâché (or burlap-mâché) and/or fiberglass, usually covering chicken-wire frames. They reuse them for several years.

You can also get a catalog of plastic rocks (cast from molds made from real rocks). They are available from Rotocast, (800) 327-

5062. Some have caps that can be removed so that you can put pots in them. Finally, some of the rocks used in the Central Feature sets (for example, in the water-garden grotto) were carved or molded from styrofoam.

How do I care for a banana tree? I bought it a year ago and now it's about three-feet high. Thanks for the help.

Anonymous, via the Internet

Banana trees require consistently moist soil that also has good drainage. During the cold-weather months, you should place the potted plant in a very humid environment with a fairly even, warm temperature (65-75°F). From spring to summer, water regularly and apply a balanced liquid fertilizer. If you plan to bring your potted banana tree outdoors this summer, put it in a sheltered spot, so the leaves won't get shredded by wind.

Do you have a question for our garden experts? If so, contact PHS's Horticultural Hotline in the McLean Library, which is open Monday-Friday, 9:30-noon. Phone (215) 988-8777; fax (215) 988-8783; email: askagardener@pennhort.org



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First Millennium Garden

Create your own Medieval Masterpiece

**Story and
Photographs by
Pamela D. Jacobsen**

As the sun rises in the morning sky, the garden comes alive. Beds of purple-flowering lavender coax honeybees away from musky, sweet scented apothecary roses. Cheerful masses of clove pinks succeed in seducing fuzzy bottomed bumblebees toward their pungent aroma, and clusters of yellow tansy flowers hang low under the weight of a monarch butterfly sipping nectar. Kneeling beside a raised garden bed is a woman pulling weeds. Her name is Meadhbh Eo'Ghann, and she alone tends this medieval herb garden. For a brief moment she pauses, certain she will hear the gentle words of Brother Cadfael calling to her from the abbey. But the peacefulness of this place is interrupted by the hum of jet engines passing overhead in a cloudless blue sky. Broken is the spell of another time and place.





A black lattice arbor covered in hops serves as the portal to the medieval herb garden. The female inflorescences of hops (*Humulus lupulus*) are a primary ingredient in the brewing of beers and ales, balancing the sweetness of malted grain with a slightly bitter taste. Today, hops has found a renewed popularity thanks to "microbrew" beers.



A First Millennium Garden



Top: Like a modern vegetable plot, this garden began as a series of raised beds, arranged in a clean, geometric manner. **Bottom:** The garden in its first year of bloom. **Right:** A view of the matured garden, now full of thriving, historically accurate plants.

Seven years ago, I discovered the works of Ellis Peters, author of the *Cadfael Chronicles*. The protagonist in this fictional mystery series is a 12th-century Welsh monk named Brother Cadfael, whose job is to tend his abbey's herb garden. After reading these books, I was consumed with the idea of creating my own medieval herb garden, circa 1000 to 1200 A.D. While doing initial research, I came across (and later joined) the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), a non-profit international organization whose members study and recreate life in medieval times. Within that group, I became the persona, Meadhbh Eo'Ghann (a Scots-Gaelic name pronounced *May-eve O-van*), a Scottish herbalist living in Dublin, Ireland.

My medieval garden is now five years old, and I look upon it as Meadhbh's tribute to Brother Cadfael. By looking through the eyes of these two imaginary characters, I have learned a new way of gardening and gained a new understanding of ages past.





From Dream to Reality

My 567-square foot garden (27 by 21 feet) resides in an area where an old, above-ground swimming pool used to be. When the structure was removed, more than 12 inches of pure sand remained, which turned out to be fortuitous as many medieval gardens relied on thick sand walkways—no doubt because it deterred weed growth. Facing south, this site also receives the maximum amount of sunlight, an important requirement for most herbs.

Designing the layout proved far simpler than I had anticipated. Reading commentaries by numerous medieval-garden scholars, I learned that rectangular beds—"with the thrilling regularity of a chessboard," as garden scholar Linda E. Voigts described it—were well suited for my barren, sandy soil. Consequently, 14 wooden raised beds of various heights were built to outline the garden perimeter. Since a focal point was common practice, I placed a gargoyle statue in the center and surrounded it with four smaller beds. And because one of my goals was to

include as many medieval plant species as possible, I opted for a turf seat rather than a regular bench. This feature, popular from late 12th century on, is similar to a raised bed (about 16 inches in height) that is planted with herbs or grass on which you can sit.

My most vexing problem was how to enclose the site. Monastic gardens were almost always walled in and placed close to the main building for protection and easy access. I solved my dilemma by using an existing arborvitae hedge growing along the eastern and southern sides; creating a lattice backing along our north facing deck; and building an arbor entrance to the west, bordered on both sides by a four-foot tall lattice fence. In medieval times, the fence would have been of wattle, made by interweaving young saplings. Since this is a time-consuming project, I have postponed its creation.

In keeping with traditional medieval practice, I filled the raised beds with soil, compost, and composted manure, all level with the top. After the first

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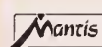
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Above: The garden's "turf seat," which is covered in low-growing thyme and surrounded by *Rosa gallica* and the silver-leaved sea holly. **Below:** A closeup of the eglantine or sweetbrier rose (*Rosa eglanteria*), which has cupped, single flowers of rose-pink in summer and, in fall, round red hips that were made into healing teas. Like many old roses, *Rosa eglanteria* syn. *R. rubiginosa* was also favored for its fragrant petals, which were used to create rose water, oils for ointments, syrups, and cosmetics.



A First Millennium Garden



year, normal soil compaction resulted in a three-inch drop. In hindsight, I'd recommend filling raised beds in autumn; this gives the soil time to settle and allows additional filling (prior to planting) in the spring.

The Delight of Herbs

Over the past five years, many people have toured my herb garden and invariably they ask how I knew which herbs to plant. Generally, I used reliable medieval garden texts, and purchased plants of the closest modern-day equivalent. The idea of any plant species from medieval times remaining genetically unaltered is hard to imagine, especially with hybridization by growers.

Still, after researching various medieval herbals, I found quite a variation in plants deemed appropriate for these gardens. I finally settled on the garden plan of the 9th-century Benedictine abbey of St. Gall (Switzerland), in conjunction with herb selections referenced from *Medieval Gardens*, a book written by renowned medieval-garden historian John Harvey. This book indexes herbs by common and scientific names, and provides time periods of when they were most widely grown.

My goal was to include as many herb species as possible, but I feared this "cramming" would make the result less than authentic. When I came across a statement, written by garden scholar Linda E. Voigts, I rejoiced: "The assumption that medieval gardeners used sparse plantings is evidently a modern misunderstanding of the conventions of medieval painting." All my garden beds now "authentically" burgeon with plants, and this compactness helps cut down on weed growth.

Monastic gardens were created for maximum usefulness. The distinction we make between fruit, vegetables, flowers, and herbs would have been foreign to that time period, so I incorporated species from all of these categories. Plants were arranged according to conventional gardening wisdom, with tall herbs like eglantine rose, valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), and marshmallow placed along back borders to avoid casting long shadows. After years of searching, I was finally able to plant a "medlar apple" tree

(*Mespilus germanica*), a common fruit in medieval days. Finally, grapes—for that all important "medicinal" wine—were added to the deepest raised beds abutting the lattice decking. In summer, their dense leaves make a delightful green wall and dark purple fruits hang down in clusters in autumn.

Many herbs we still consider medicinal were also used in the medieval period, and those in my garden include sage, rue, tansy, sorrel, wormwood, various mints, lavender, germander, santolina, fennel, pennyroyal, thyme, dill, chervil, and potted rosemary. Others with exceptionally attractive flowers, such as eglantine and apothecary roses, the Madonna lily, *Iris germanica*, sweet peas, and calendula, were added for medicinal value and to "uplift the spirits."

I rotate yearly crops of leeks, highly regarded by medieval folk as food and medicine, with onion and garlic. Two rather unusual European coastal plants used as food—samphire (*Critbium maritimum*) and sea kale (*Crambe maritima*)—were planted to honor Meadhbh's coastal "birthplace," the Isle of Skye (Scotland). The turf seat, to my dismay, is beautiful to behold, yet difficult to sit on due to a preponderance of visiting bees. For the past two years, four low-growing species of *Thymus* have produced a dense, soft cascade over the seat and down the front. Our lady's bedstraw, pennyroyal, recumbent mints, and English daisies have also been planted in previous years, with similar bee-attracting results. It appears that only grass should be planted if the seat is going to be used.

The Day's Toil

Maintaining a medieval herb garden is greatly simplified using raised beds. Watering, done long ago with hollow gourds or buckets, is now accomplished efficiently by inserting a hose into the soil near the center of each bed and allowing water to gently trickle down to water each plant (using a soaker hose will accomplish the same thing). As for weeding, it is greatly lessened when beds are thickly planted. Outside of the use of straw, I could find no mention of mulching in any of the sources studied, so I rely on a

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete
Pete Prown, Editor



spring topping of compost from my own bins.

As was the common practice in medieval times, only natural (organic) gardening techniques are used in my garden. I have had little difficulty maintaining healthy plants, using a diverse collection of plant specimens and providing a rich, healthy soil. Meadhbh, making her home in coastal Dublin, would have had easy access to seaweed, a fertilizer known since ancient times. With this in mind, I apply sea kelp extract several times each summer. The benefits of this have been increased vitality and drought-resistance.

The Season's Harvest

Monks celebrated the first feast of harvest on August 6, bringing in grapes to be blessed. Harvesting continued throughout the summer and into late autumn. Like medieval gardeners, I harvest my herbs. Rosemary, sage, chervil, rose hips, thyme, and hyssop are dried for cooking, while leeks, onions and garlic are kept in cold storage. Lavender, calendula, and St. John's wort (*Hypericum*) become *simples*—medicines made from one or two herbs—or *salves*.

Lavender stalks are also bundled and stored for fragrance. As the garden dies back, debris is removed and composted. In my sheltered site (Zone 5), it isn't uncommon for me to have lavender still in bloom until late October. By the killing frost or an early snowfall, the once-rock hard medlar apples are finally soft enough to be picked and eaten, yielding an applesauce-like consistency with a hint of spiciness.

The encroaching evening air, heavy with the fragrance of autumn, signals the end of another work day. For a fleeting moment, as Meadhbh heads out the garden entrance, she pauses, listening for Cadfael, whose voice is but a whisper of gentle breeze:

"The colors of late autumn are the colors of the sunset: the farewell of the year and the farewell of the day."

Fondly, Meadhbh looks back at the garden she has created. And to all who strive to raise up their own medieval gardens, she bids thee well. ❖

Pamela D. Jacobsen is a garden writer living in New England. This is her first article for *Green Scene*.

A First Millennium Garden



Brother Cadfael and Shrewsbury Quest

The *Cadfael Chronicles* were created by author Edith Pargeter, who used the pseudonym Ellis Peters when writing her 20 mystery books. Brother Cadfael, the protagonist, is a Welsh monk who joined the Benedictine order at Shrewsbury Abbey at the age of 40. A soldier by trade prior to becoming a monk, he taught himself herbal medicine and was duly put in charge of the Abbey's herb garden. In each book, Cadfael triumphs as sleuth *extraordinaire*, solving crimes while dispensing herbal wisdom. The *Cadfael Chronicles* are based upon the historical Shrewsbury Abbey, built in 1083. Years later, it became a Benedictine monastery of great importance and power. Today, the church remains open for worship and visitors, having survived the Benedictine dissolution.

In 1994, Shrewsbury Quest, located in Shrewsbury, opposite the Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul, was opened to the public. More than a simple "living history" museum, it is an authentic recreation of 12th-century monastic life, built partially of renovated monastic buildings. Cadfael's herb gardens, designed by garden historian Sylvia Landsberg, accurately recreate a 12th-century herb garden and encompass a quarter acre of the property. Within the Quest is a

Scriptorium, where monks created illuminated manuscripts, and a restaurant serving medieval fare. Visitors can also stroll through various barns, a recreation of Ellis Peter's writing studio, and Brother Cadfael's own herbal workshop.

For more information about Shrewsbury Quest, contact the Shrewsbury Quest, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, UK. Phone: 011-44-1743-243324. Internet website: www.go2.co.uk/quest/index.html. To learn more about the herbs used by Cadfael and other medieval herbalists, read *Brother Cadfael's Herb Garden*, by Rob Talbot and Robing Whiteman (Little, Brown and Company, 1996).

The Society for Creative Anachronism is a nonprofit organization with worldwide membership. Contact them at: SCA, P.O. Box 360789, Milpitas, CA 95036-0789. (800) 789-7486. Website: www.sca.org.



Shrewsbury Cathedral, England.

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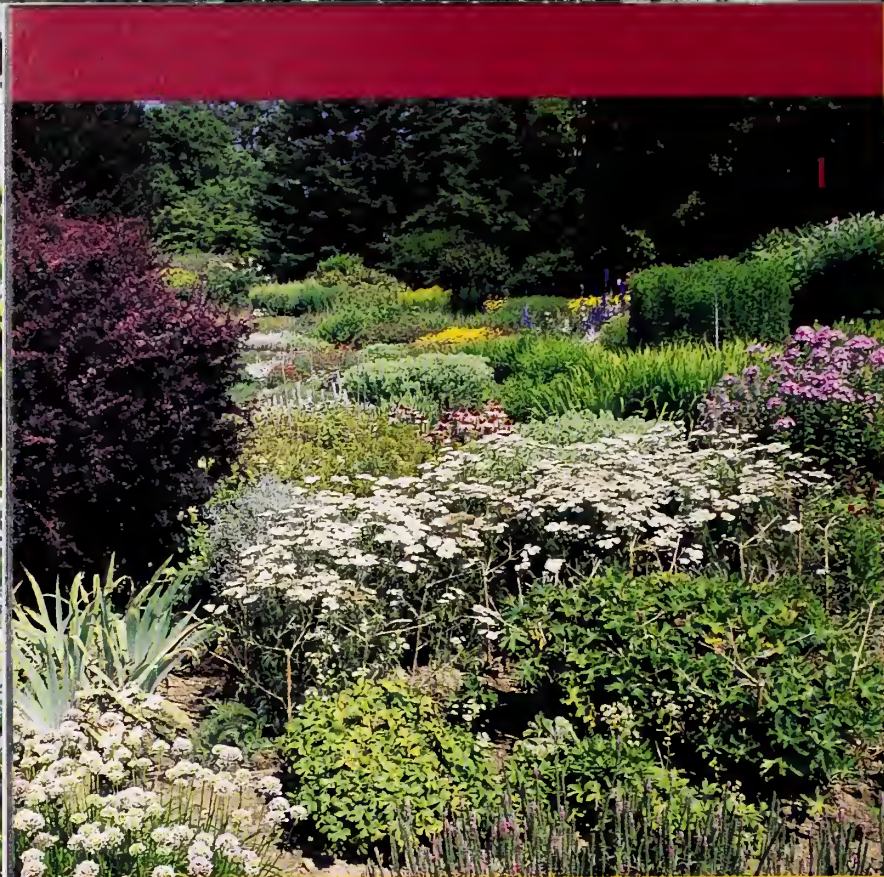
*Story by Fran Sorin
Photographs by Harry Kalish*

Basic Tips From A Humble Garden Master

I once had a music teacher who believed that anyone could learn to play a musical instrument competently if they so desired. Those of us who were blessed enough to have him in our lives considered him to be a musical genius, though he dismissed that notion instantly. Jock Christie reminds me of that music teacher. Jock is the head gardener at Doe Run, a magnificent estate garden in Chester County owned by Sir John Thouron, and it's been 10 years since I first met Jock and apprenticed with him. During that time, I have questioned him repeatedly on how he does what he does so magically in the gardens at Doe Run. Invariably, Jock responds with a, "Oh, it's not difficult. You just have to..." and proceeds to explain some glorious gardening concept or technique.

I have attempted on several occasions to follow Jock's sage words, sometimes with a great flush of success and other times with repeated bouts of failure and frustration. But to Jock, an artist extraordinaire, gardening is simple. For the rest of us aspiring gardeners, he is a yardstick by which we can measure our gardening prowess. He embodies the traits of a true master: hard work, few words, perfectionism and, most of all, a profound sense of humility.

So, with that prologue in mind, I pass on to you a few of the simple planting concepts that Jock has passed on to me—all of which he has used over the years to create the luscious herbaceous borders at Doe Run.



1. It's All In The Soil

You don't get gorgeous plants like this without amending the soil. As Jock notes frequently, good, rich soil is the backbone of a healthy, nutritious garden. You can never add too much compost. Make sure soil is crumbly with a fork or in your hands before planting your spring seedlings or fall bulbs and perennials. If you need to walk on soil while planting, work it over with a fork afterwards to keep it light and "breathing," as he puts it.

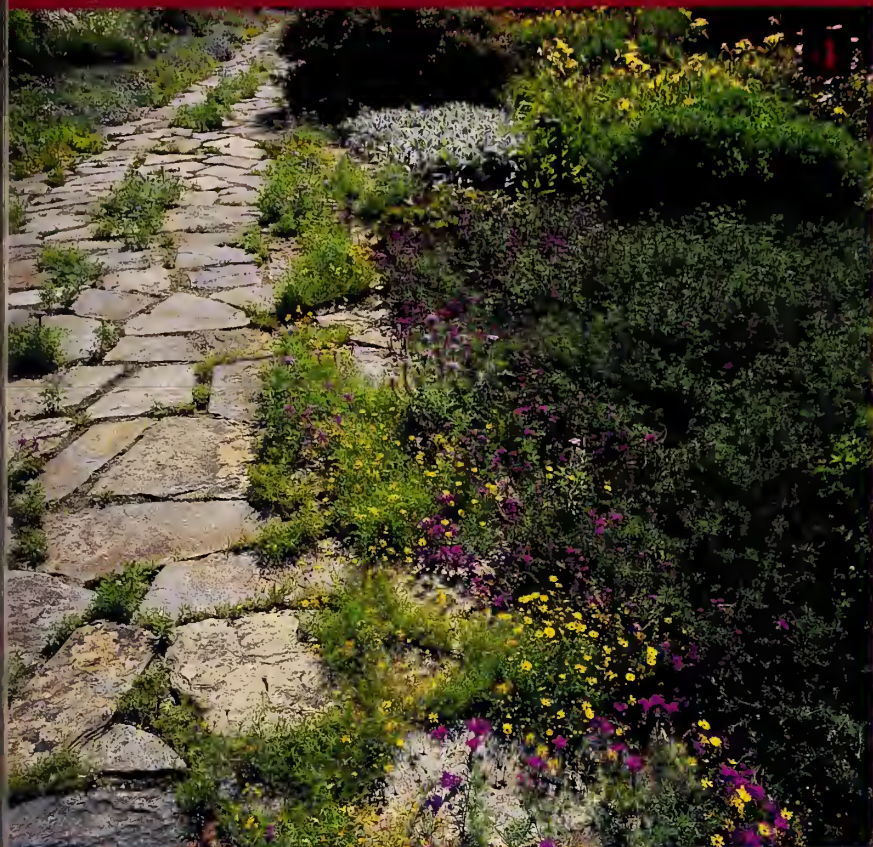
2. At Odds With Your Plants

Plant smaller perennials and annuals in odd numbers. Jock rarely uses less than five of one specimen and often up to 13 or 15 of one kind of flower. Some of his favorite front-of-the-border plants are verbenas, lantanas, helianthemums, dianthus, erodiums, oenotheras, and geraniums.

3. Step It Up

Design your plantings with the shortest perennials in front, the medium-height ones in the middle, and tallest in the back. Although this is the old English style of planting, if you use a variety of different textures and forms, your borders will not look stagnant. Instead, they will have a lush flowing look with some great exclamation points.



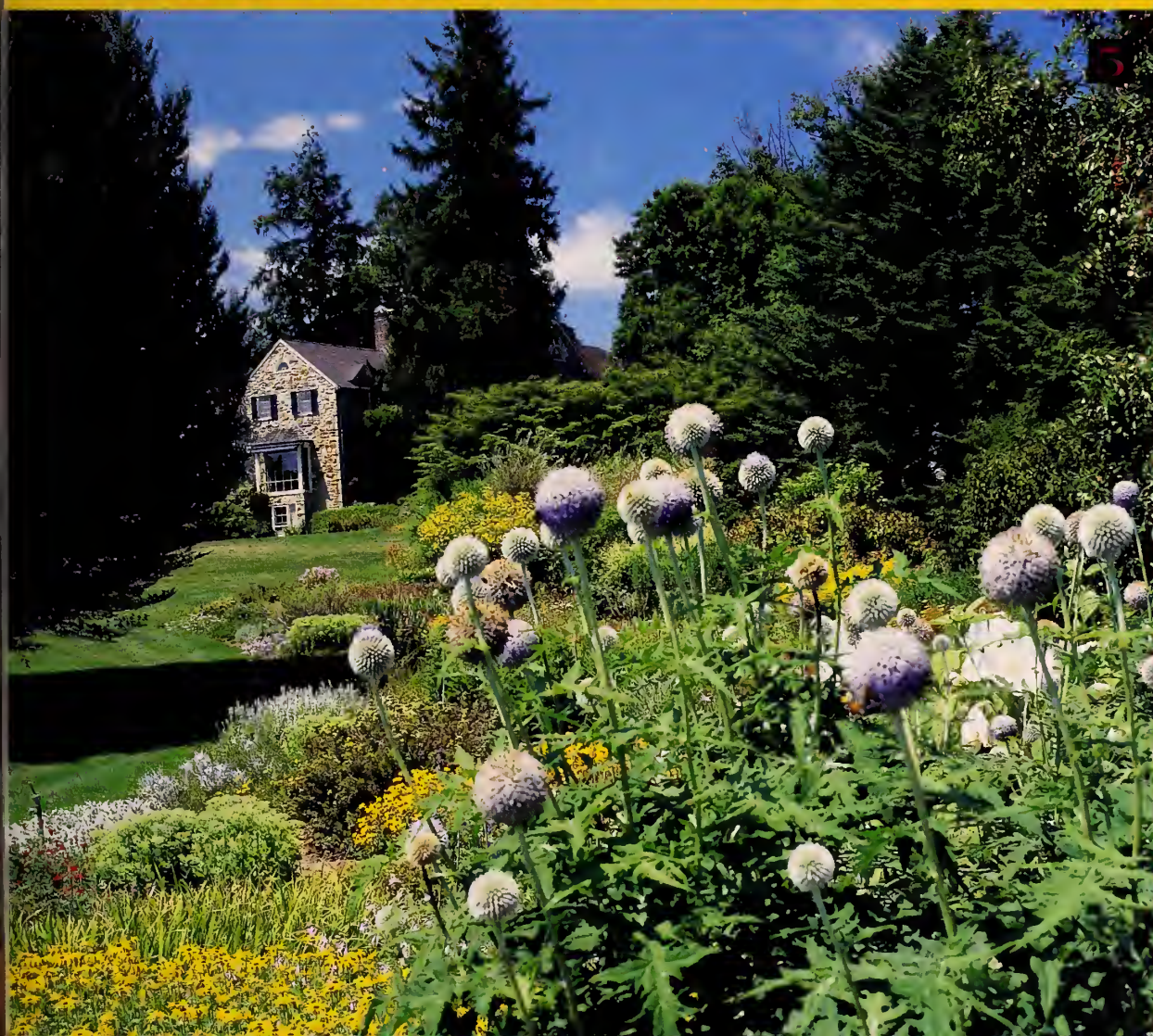


4. Let Seeds Fall Where They May

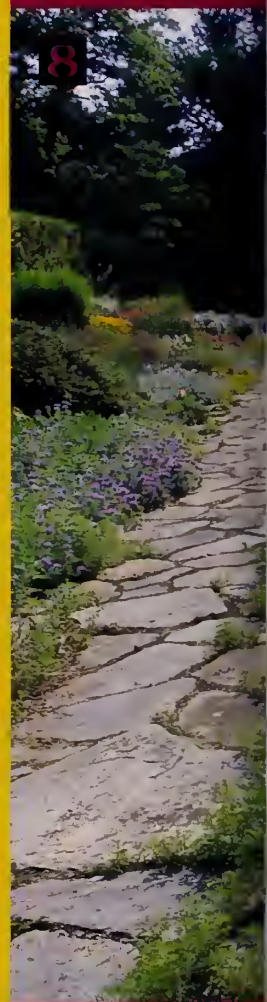
Allow annuals and perennials to self seed in stone walkways or crevices. It adds a dimension of "naturalness" and sumptuousness. In the main border at Doe Run, Jock urges *Verbena* 'Homestead', *Helianthemum* 'Wisley Pink', lady's mantle and a little yellow daisy which he calls "Delbert daisy" to randomly weave their way through the massive stone walkway and on the outer rims of the four quadrant borders with a glorious sense of abandonment.

5. Use Living Focal Points

Where there is an open space in your borders, feel free to insert a plant that will grab the eye. It can be just one of a certain specimen. Jock is known for his audacious perennials that come out to grab the visitors' attention at different junctures throughout the garden, such as a shot of burnt orange heleniums, a few statuesque carmine-red poppies, or an imposing *Crambe cordifolia*.



**"So, for all of you
color theorists who
think repetition
of color and specimens
is important to make
a perennial border
coherent and flowing,
think again."**



6. When In Doubt....

Use white as a filler, especially when you need a calming effect in the garden. One of Jock's favorites at Doe Run is the huge, silver-leaved *Salvia sclarea*.

7. All In The Family

If you want to make a dazzling picture, use one type of perennial or annual in a massive planting. Jock's delphinium garden and poppy meadow dazzle the eye and capture the soul. Each of these gardens is multi-colored but is limited to one type of flower. For an even grander impact, Jock planted this entire field with sunflowers, which veritably erupts with yellow each July.

8. The Rainbow Connection

Don't be afraid to mix a rainbow of colors in your herbaceous border. At Doe Run, the gamut of colors that Jock utilizes in his borders is astounding. When asked how he does it, he just

shrugs his shoulders and murmurs, "I don't know." So, for all of you color theorists who think repetition of color and specimens is important to make a perennial border coherent and flowing, think again. Orange, pink, yellow, purple, blue, and white all placed together with a wide spectrum of hues is what the borders at Doe Run are about. True, Jock has created a massive amount of island-shaped beds, but for the reckless and free at heart, go for it—you might just be pleasantly surprised.

And if anyone dares ask how you had the nerve to it, just shrug your shoulders with a great degree of humility and quietly say, "I don't know." With that response, you will be in good company. ♦

Fran Sorin is a garden designer who resides in Bryn Mawr, PA. She is the gardening expert on The Weekend Today Show and makes appearances on HGTV and The Discovery Channel. Fran's web site is www.fransorin.com. She can also be contacted at (610) 527-8049.



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NEW YEAR

Exciting Plant Introductions for 2000

by Dorothy Noble

What better way for a plant lover to celebrate the millennium than with new flower varieties. Plant breeders from around the world have created an abundance of fresh material for this season to ignite your gardening passions. Many of the 2000 introductions feature entirely new series or classes of flowers, and several are true breeding breakthroughs, as you'll see in the following sneak peek. While these aren't all the new flowers that will show up in garden centers across the country next spring, it will surely give you a head start on the rest of the flower-loving crowd.

Fully double blooms mark the latest tuberous **begonias**. A profusion of 2-inch, white blooms mark the elegant, cascading 'Illumination' begonias. 'Rose Petticoat'—which is creamy-white with a bright rosy edge—has now joined the popular tuberous 'Nonstop' series. And the 'Queen' series, which is the first seed-produced semperflorens ("wax") begonia, will grace hanging baskets and patio containers with fully double white, red,

and pink blossoms that resemble roses.

Never before bred as an annual-bedding plant, the **campanula** 'Isabella Blue' (*Campanula longistyla*) remains compact at 6-8 inches, making it perfect for the front of borders. Its vibrant medium-blue, bell-shaped flowers bloom prolifically, making it even more attractive. For a hotter tone, try 'Cosmic Orange' **cosmos**, which picked up a 2000 All-America Selections award (AAS). One can easily see why, too: The self-supporting double and semi-double, 2-inch blooms give a brilliant orange display on spreading plants (1 to 1-1/2 feet wide) from early summer until frost.

Slightly more than 1-foot high, **delphinium** 'Laurin' branches into a bushy plant loaded with vivid orange, tubular flowers. Once established, it may overwinter to create a splash in next year's early summer border or rock garden. Meanwhile, the hybrid **dianthus** 'Melody Pink' drew another 2000 AAS flower award. Bred specifically as a cut flower, its sprays of 1-inch pink blooms on 24-inch stems will add height to a flower arrangement or garden border. And for a new class of flowers, **lisianthus** may find a place in gardens of the new millennium. Unusual blue, pink, or white bell-shaped flowers grace the dwarf 7-9 inch

S

Revolutions

Monarda
'Panorama
Red Shades'





Begonia 'Rose Petticoat'



Campanula 'Isabello Blue'



Dianthus 'Melody Pink'



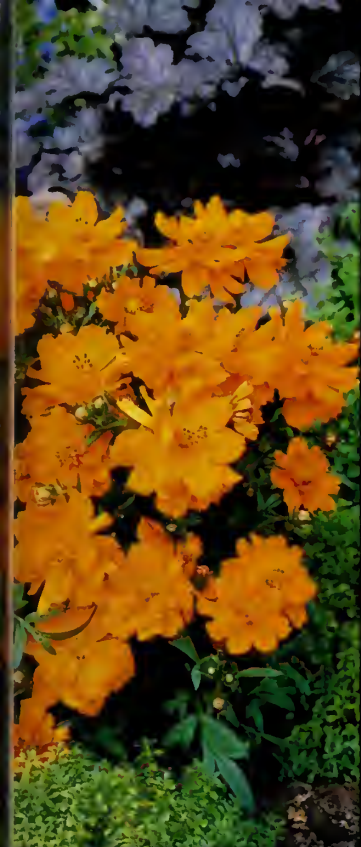
Lisianthus 'Lizzy'



Cosmos 'Cosmic Orange'



Phlox '21st Century Phlox'



Impatiens 'Pink Picotee'



Delphinium 'Laurin'

'Lizzy', making it a real head-turner in your garden.

Gardeners count on **impatiens** to color shady areas. Breeding efforts have improved performance in hot weather and increased the flower size, as well as broadened its already impressive range of color. Metallic lilac and salmon augment the early-flowering and heat-tolerant 'Carnival' series. Noted for its vigor and size, the 'Impulse' series impatiens has added 'Pink Picotee.' A deep-rose edge highlights its almost white, light pink flowers. The breeder suggests combining 'Impulse Pink Picotee' with cranberry or carnine for a striking effect.

Are you a bird lover? 'Panorama Red Shades' **monarda** will bring hummingbirds to your garden. Showy in large containers, at 2-1/2 feet tall, it is also an interesting cut flower. The first F1 hybrid

phlox (*Phlox drummondii*), '21st Century Phlox,' performs vigorously spring to frost [F1 hybrids are the first generation of offspring from two unlike parents. Because they are first generation, they exhibit an even share of each parents traits. —editor]. The new magenta mix contains an array of white, red, magenta, and rose shades.

For **nicotiana** fans, welcome the newcomer 'Saratoga'. Shades of rose, lime, red, white, and a purple bicolor light up the trumpet-shaped flowers on these bushy plants. This plant reaches a height of 1 foot; for something taller, check out 'Domino', which is 16-inches high. Hues of antique peach and antique red have now been added to this nicotiana type and lend even more color appeal to the summer landscape. And for a new face in

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Nicotiana 'Saratoga'



Pentas 'Butterfly'



Torenia 'Duchess Deep Blue'



A new flower, 'Panola Panache'



Pansy 'Joker Red Gold'



'Ikarus' Sunflowers



Tithonia 'Fiesta Del Sol'

the **pansy** world, look to 'Joker Red Gold', which adds even more brilliance to this standout pansy series. It sports an unusual color combination of burnt orange-red and deep yellow, creating a dramatic visual effect.

As the name suggests, butterflies flutter to the tiny star-shaped flowers on huge flower heads of 'Butterfly' **pentas**. This hybrid, blooming continuously, thrives in heat and sun. The plant spreads 1-2 feet, and reaches almost 2 feet in height. Blush, cherry red, deep pink, and lavender bolster the color selections. 'New Look Rose' joins red, pink, and violet to the dwarf, 8-10 inch 'New Look' series of pentas. The first dwarf, basal-branching pentas from seed, this series commands attention in landscapes, patio containers, and hanging baskets.

"'Ikarus' brings the sun to you," says the breeder. Its 4-foot, sturdy stems branch into an abundance of 4-6 inch light yellow, dark-centered **sunflowers**. Another newcomer developed by the same breeder, 'Soraya,' sports rich orange 4-6 inch flowers, but on 6-foot stems. This striking beauty captured an AAS award for 2000 and no wonder. Besides putting on a show outdoors, 'Soraya' excels as a cut flower, as does 'Ikarus'. Be careful, though—sunflower pollen can stain linens. 'Fiesta Del Sol' also garnered an AAS award for 2000 and, at 2-1/2 feet, it is the most compact **tithonia** on the market. Needing no support, this Mexican sunflower can take heat and drought with the best of them. Best of all, the splashy orange, 2-1/2 to 3-inch flowers entice butterflies all summer. Who could ask for more?

Think of a royal carpet of deep blue, light blue, pink, and white. If that's what you are looking for, then 'Duchess Deep Blue' **torenia** fits beautifully. A compact 6-8 inches, this beauty flowers early and uniformly. This torenia is an entirely new series and will be an exciting addition to this range of annuals.

Neither a pansy nor a viola, but a cross between the two, we welcome the **panola** to gardens in the new century. 'Panola Panache' combines the free flow-

New Plants at the Philadelphia Flower Show

Come to the 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show and see the special New Plant Introduction exhibit, brought to you by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. This display will show off winners of the 2000 Gold Medal Plant Award, all of which are perfect specimens for growing in the Delaware Valley. You will be able to see lovely Gold Medal plants blooming in the wintery days of early March, along with top-rated annuals, perennials, and a few surprises to delight plant lovers at the Show.

According to exhibit coordinator Jackie Reardon, "This display will showcase new and underused plants that thrive in our region. They are both rugged and beautiful, which is what we want from any plant in our garden. More than just presenting attractive plants, however, this exhibit will give the public useful information about each plant. Volunteers from the Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association will also be on hand to give visitors information and tips on these exciting cultivars. Come see, learn, and appreciate all of the Gold Medal champions."

For more on Gold Medal plants, see the November 1999 issue of *Green Scene* or visit our website at www.libertynet.org/phs.

ering characteristics of violas, but with vibrant color combinations that include purple-yellow blotch, true blue, red with blotch, primrose, and mauve with a dark-er blotch. All flower earlier than violas on compact plants, while the stems on these short flowers resist the stretching which often occurs in warm temperatures. What's more, this new plant performs spring and fall, and overwinters well, too.

This wraps up our quick look at many exciting flowers for 2000. So what are you waiting for? Make a New Year's resolution to look for these and more varieties in seed catalogs and garden centers, and start the century with the joy that only flowers can bring. ♦

Author-researcher Dorothy Noble has a special love for flowers and vegetables, which manifests itself in her many articles for *Green Scene*. Dorothy's work also appears in national and regional trade publications in the area of commercial vegetables, fruits, and flowers.

We wish to thank the following breeders/distributors for supplying information on their introductions. To seek out the plants described in this article, request each plant by name. While home gardeners cannot obtain seeds from these breeders directly, using the specific plant name will always get you the best results at your local garden center or via mail-order.

Begonia

'Illumination',
Ernst Benary Seed
Growers Ltd.
'Rose Petticoat',
Benary
'Queen', Daebnfeldt, Inc.
Campanula
'Isabella Blue',
Goldsmith Seeds, Inc.

Cosmos

'Cosmic Orange', Benary

Delphinium

'Laurin', Benary

Dianthus

'Melody Pink',
Sakata Seed Corporation

Impatiens

'Carnival', Daebnfeldt
'Impulse Pink Picotee',
Novartis Seeds

Lisianthus

'Lizzy', Goldsmith

Monarda

'Panorama Red Shades',
Benary

Nicotiana

'Domino', Floranova
'Saratoga', Goldsmith

Pansy

'Joker Red Gold', Benary

Pentas

'Butterfly', Ball
'New Look Rose', Benary

Petunia

'Symphony', Takii
'Tidal Wave', Ball

Phlox

'21st Century', Waller
Flowerseed Company

Sunflower

'Ikarus', Benary
'Soraya', Benary

Tithonia

'Fiesta Del Sol', Benary

Torenia

'Dutchess Deep Blue',
Goldsmith

Panola


'Panola Panache', Waller

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A ROOM WITH A VIEW

*Story by Claire Sawyers
Photographs by Harry Kalish*



Some of the best gardening advice I have to offer gardeners has nothing to do with plants or the outdoors. In fact, it's simple: don't put up curtains. Windows, if seen as picture frames for garden vignettes, can provide some of the most exhilarating garden experiences you can have, particularly on days when you can't venture outside. How does one create these special vistas? It's all a matter of designing your garden from the inside out.

Create a
Special
Vista
To Bring
Your
Garden
Indoors





These windows by a workspace provide eyecatching seasonal vistas all year long.



The mark of a great garden, in my opinion, is either a strong inside/outside connection or the clever integration of the architecture and the garden. Buying “window treatments”—whether blinds, shades or sheers—to cover up these views means missing the opportunity to create memorable vistas. It would be better to spend the money on creating an interesting shrub border or an evergreen screen, which can also serve as a backdrop for a border of glowing perennials. In this way it's possible to create privacy, yet at the same time feel a connection to the outside. In a sense, you can be visual-

ly transported out to the garden. (If you inherited expensive curtains with your property and would feel guilty about taking them down to enhance your enjoyment of the outdoors, just think of the Halloween costumes you can make from them or the school play you can support by donating them.)

I live in a small bungalow in the heart of town. I have no curtains. Even with close neighbors, by carefully planning and planting, it's possible to live without curtains and create memorable garden views. I'm not blessed with a window over my kitchen sink, but from the spot

in front of my sink, I can stand and look out a kitchen window into my back garden. There, I can admire a frame filled with the colorful foliage of *Cercis canadensis* ‘Forest Pansy’, which shades a metal sculpture of a sun face. From the same spot I can look through the front room window and see a mass of oakleaf hydrangeas, loaded with flowers during the summer or glowing with warm colors during the fall or displaying dried flower heads through the winter. These views are never blocked with curtains or shades; with the swivel of my head while I'm washing dishes, I get to see two

views into my garden which bring me daily satisfaction, even if I'm too busy to actually get out in the garden.

H. E duPont, creator and so-called head gardener at the beloved Winterthur Museum and Gardens (in nearby Centerville, Delaware), took the importance of this kind of inside-to-outside connection to levels of sophistication. There, duPont coordinated seasonal floral displays outside with the fabric colors found inside the rooms. Granted, he had more rooms and windows to work with than most of us ever will, but for inspiration, flip through the picture books on Winterthur and soon you will be able to appreciate how far you can take this concept.

In *The Winterthur Garden* (1995), a caption to a pair of photos reads: "*The Blue Room....had views of the Iris Garden in the 1930s and a medley of Spanish bluebells and lavender, pink, and rose azaleas later. The textile fixtures in the room were changed with the seasons, as the succession of bloom in the landscape progressed.*" While changing interior fabrics (table clothes, drapes, etc.) to match the seasonal color might seem extreme in this day and age, it does illustrate how to create a strong inside-outside connection between home and garden.

For further inspiration, flip through any of the numerous architectural books on Frank Lloyd Wright's work. You'll see examples of his Prairie-style and Usonian residential designs, many featuring hallways lined with "ribbon" windows, living rooms with rows of windows or wrap-around windows on the corners, and almost all without curtains. In those with curtains, the fabrics don't obscure the window opening at all (I suspect in instances where they do, the owners added them later, much to the architect's horror). Wright's ability to connect the inside of his houses to the outside is one defining characteristic of his work and one that surely contributed to his success.

Are you missing these gardening opportunities? Here's my acid test to find out: Stand in front of each one of your windows and ask yourself, *Is this a view I'm drawn into? Is it a view that gives me pleasure?* If not, I'd say you're missing a valuable gardening opportunity, particularly if it's a window you pass by on a regular basis, or study or eat by. If you find yourself staring into the brown twiggy center of an overgrown shrub or



My Own "Room With a View"

by Jane Pepper, PHS President

Until 1996, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society had its headquarters in Philadelphia's Society Hill as one of the fortunate tenants of Independence National Historical Park. The view from my "room" was idyllic. Beyond the amelanchier tree (that bloomed without fail every year the first week of April), there was a trellis covered with clematis and a tree peony that produced amazingly big blossoms in May. And in winter, when I needed inspiration, I could stare across the green area between Walnut and Chestnut streets at the elegant tracery formed by branches of the park's stately trees.

My view from our new offices at 20th and Arch may not be as pastoral, but it's just as interesting and it keeps changing. When I look to the west, I see the fourth-floor balconies of apartments on Cuthbert Street. One is fronted with four pots containing Alberta spruce. Next door, the plantings are more informal and, if I look hard enough, I can make out roses, geraniums, and lilies, with a few pots waiting for inspiration. Maybe they are planning to plant a few tomatoes in those pots. To the east, if I look skywards, I can see William Penn on top of City Hall. If I look down five stories onto Arch Street, I see five resplendent oaks, recently planted by CMS Companies, who own the building on the southeast corner of 20th and Arch.

My favorite view, however, is to the south where, over the past couple of

years, it's been my great pleasure to witness the transformation of a dirty, trash-strewn block into a beautiful landscape. This 2000 block of John F. Kennedy Boulevard is now a wonder to behold, with its lush green lawn and plantings that include maples and ashes, bearberry, sweet woodruff, and periwinkle. These plantings help block out the memories of the old shoes, rubber tires, washing machines, and unmentionables that used to be part of this landscape.

Initially, PHS organized clean-up parties with volunteers from the Logan Square Neighborhood Association and the Mayor's Office of Community Services to remove the trash with help from SEPTA. Later, we invested revenues generated through the Philadelphia Flower Show to develop an overall landscape plan for the Boulevard from 20th Street to 30th Street Station. The following year, The Pew Charitable Trusts provided a challenge grant to help us encourage tenants in Commerce Square and other buildings that look down onto these blocks of John F. Kennedy Boulevard to provide donations for the plantings.

With help from many, the view from my room has improved dramatically and I look forward to continued improvements in years to come. I can only hope your view is just as inspiring.

tree, put it on your list to chop down. Using plants and beds with interesting year-round structure, foliage, and shape to craft a view can be a great visual asset. If you find you're looking out across your plot into the neighbor's driveway where a speedboat resides usually covered with a blue tarp, plan on planting *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Yoshino' or another tall evergreen to screen out such unsatisfying "borrowed scenery."

If you find you're looking out on something that simply can't be planted, such as an expanse of tarmac, a container garden outside the window can bring beauty into the room. Another solution would be to use a café curtain to cover the bottom half of the window, directing your view up to the tree canopy that fills the top half of the window frame. On the other hand, if you find yourself leading garden visitors inside to watch your koi swimming about, because the best view of your pool is from your dining room, you don't need to read any further.

A corollary to not putting curtains up is not placing more furniture right outside your windows and doorways. For example, if you add French doors to a porch to tie the garden into your house,



The floor-to-ceiling windows in this room draw the garden into the dining area.

but then park chairs, tables, cabinets or bars outside the door, you're missing another opportunity. Place outdoor furniture where it won't interfere with the dramatic opening you've just created to the outdoors. Keep your views simple

and uncluttered.

Finally, if you're starting with a clean slate—such as a new house on an empty lot—use your windows and doors to help frame beds and borders. Place a perennial border as an extension from a door in the house or a window at the end of a hallway; or place specimen trees where their picturesque trunks or branching patterns are in line with a view out of a window.

Even if you live in a modest urban bungalow, you can use each window as an opportunity to create a garden picture. If you do this, my bet is you'll have a better garden. Also, because you'll enjoy your house more from the inside out, you'll never feel "trapped inside" on stormy or wintry days. Indeed, this all lends credence to the maxim: *Beauty comes from the inside.* ♦

Claire Sawyers is the director of the Scatt Arboretum at Swarthmore College. She gardens at home in Media. Harry Kalish is a photographer working in the Philadelphia area who often captures gardens and landscapes on film.

Cooking is twice as much fun when there's a great view to accompany it.



LETTERS

Invasive Exotics, Part 2

In response to the exchange on invasive plants in the Sept./Oct. "Letters" section, Ms. Budd is absolutely correct on the problem with invasives. On the other hand, the bittersweet recommended by Ms. Coyle is indeed a native, and a well-behaved one at that. The problem is Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculus*), which is as bad as kudzu in the South. We have an area in a local wildlife sanctuary so overwhelmed with Oriental bittersweet that it is called "the strangled forest." Ms. Coyle's recommendations of Russian olive and honeysuckle are dangerous. Both Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) and autumn olive (*E. umbellata*) are introduced thugs and were probably not present in the 1600s. There are many native honeysuckles worth trying in the landscape, but several introduced ones (*Lonicera japonica*, *L. maackii*, *L. morrowii*, and *L. tatarica*) have become serious problems throughout the Northeast. Members should contact their local Nature Conservancy office or wildflower for information.

Joe Stranch
stranch@vgernet.net

Let me say that I am an avid fan of *Green Scene* and have found an excellent article in nearly every issue. Still, I was surprised to see the response by author Gretchen Coyle to Karen Budd's letter in the magazine. Ms. Coyle appears to be ignorant of the reasons why we should avoid "invasive exotics." Regardless, the native vs. exotic debate is quickly reaching a fevered pitch which I find to be positive. All people who use

or sell plants in any way bear a responsibility to consider their neighbors when making a decision to utilize a plant that can negatively impact the environment for decades to come.

Peter M. Mabony
landscape architect

[Thanks for your letters. In light of increasing reader interest on this "hot" topic, we plan to run an updated article on invasive plants during the coming year. However, we will continue to run letters defending both sides of a given issue, even if it's a controversial one. Anything less would be doing our readers a grave disservice. —Editor]

A Job Well Done

I am looking at the Sept./Oct. issue of *Green Scene* and just wanted to tell you how impressed I am with the magazine. What a great job you all do! It is really impressive. Because of this, I plan to order a subscription for a friend of mine who is an artist and garden buff. She'll love it.

Pam Medina
via the Internet

The Sept./Oct. issue was a breakthrough for *Green Scene*. The photography was wonderful and the articles were of real interest. Congratulations!

Anonymous
via the Internet

Conquering Mother Nature

In Pamela Vu's article on genetic engineering ["Conquering Mother Nature," Sept./Oct. 1999 issue], the author writes,

"many fear that constant exposure will lead to Bt-resistant insects and that Bt will ultimately lose its effectiveness as a pest control." This is not just an unfounded fear; it is the way our world works, since all species adapt to changes in their environment and, when exposed to a new, threatening variable, they develop resistance. Furthermore, companies engaged in genetic engineering would like to present Bt potatoes as a model of agriculture that could be less dependent on pesticides. But the pesticide is still there; it is simply applied from the inside rather than the outside, and in greater doses.

Farmers in Canada have already reported that neighboring fields of conventionally grown canola have been genetically contaminated. Again, the question of this tolerance spreading to related weeds is not whether it will happen, but how soon.

As consumers, we do have choices. We can buy organically grown food, or we can buy from companies that avoid the use of genetically engineered crops. Europeans have demanded that genetically engineered corn, soybeans, and canola be identified so that they can refuse it. Marketers and consumers in Europe won, and we in the U.S. can demand the same choices. No one can claim we have a free market if we do not have the option to make informed choices between different products.

Nancy Wygant
Philadelphia, PA

Corrections

- In the July issue, we reported that contributor Ray Rogers won 63 ribbons at the Philadelphia Flower Show. Actually, he won that many at the 1999 show alone. In total, Ray has picked up 505 ribbons and 15 rosettes during that past decade at the Flower Show.
- The photographs in the story "Late Bloomers" in the September issue were taken by Martin Weinberg. Also, the correct cultivar of the cypress, *Chamaecyparis obtusa*, is 'Draht'.
- On page 26 of the November issue, the photo is actually of Sheila McDuffie with her children.

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Photo: Avenue of the Arts, Philadelphia, Summer 1998. Container featuring tropical interest.

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6. The Potting Shed



SPECIAL 2000 PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW SECTION

10. Welcome to the Flower Show!

Adam Levine leads us on a tour of the beloved Central Feature exhibit from the upcoming Philadelphia Flower Show. This year, we look into the future of the city of Philadelphia, as well as the key role of PHS's Philadelphia Green program. You won't believe your eyes.

16. The Competitor's Edge

Judith C. McKeon talks to four blue-ribbon veterans of the Flower Show's "Competitive Classes." Glean their secret tips and tricks for winning the Big Blue. In addition, get a glimpse of the warm camaraderie that exists between the many Show entrants, some of whom have been exhibiting for 30 years or more.

24. Decades of Flowers

Wilbur Zimmerman paints a glorious history of the Philadelphia Flower Show, from its humble beginnings in 1829 to its exciting transformation in the 1960s. Did you know the Christmas poinsettia made its debut at the first Show 171 years ago? Learn this and other fascinating tidbits of Flower Show lore.

28. Vacant Land

Just as our open space is being gobbled up in the suburbs, countless acres of vacant land are being created in Philadelphia. Pamela Vu tackles this troubling subject of urban blight and how it brings down the quality of life in the city. Fortunately, there are solutions on the horizon, as this story eloquently reveals.

34. Out of the Ordinary

Sick of planting the same old flowers every year? Pamela D. Jacobsen presents 10 strange beauties that will perk up anyone's ornamental garden. Better yet, we've included a resource page, so you can track down these charming plants in a jiffy.

38. Classified Ads

40. Breaking the Lawn



Cover: "Spring is Sprung," the Defined Niche blue-ribbon winner from the 1999 Philadelphia Flower Show. Created and arranged by Anne Fox Hayes.

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Letter From the Editor

you'll soon be gazing out at your own garden and devising endlessly clever schemes of renovation and renewal. This season, you'll be doubly inspired, thanks to the Drought of '99, which left many gardens looking anything but spectacular. In my garden, some plants thrived while others were no-shows, creating the horticultural effect of a really bad haircut. While the humble black-eyed Susans lapped up July's arid weather (they marked the occasion by invading every darn bed in my garden), the rest of the season was ho-hum. Remember the gorgeous asters that I boasted about in my "Letter from the Editor" from last September? Thanks to Mr. Drought, they were D.O.A. last summer, much to my deep embarrassment. It goes without saying, too, that all my weeds did splendidly. Such is the life of a gardener.

So what's on the docket for this growing season? Well, one of my ravenna grasses has grown to be the size of a veritable Sherman tank and is threatening to annex the neighboring bed by force. This year, I'll move the 12-foot behemoth to a location where it can spread to its heart's content and terrorize my meek astilbe no more. I also have a shady, moist part in the garden that gets overrun with moss—I'll transplant hostas over there, and donate the existing moss to a neighbor who specializes in bonsai and simply craves the stuff. Then, joining the ornamental troops in the front lines will be shorter and better-behaved grasses, more big-leafed tropicals (*oh, why not*—everybody else is doing it), and, if I can find it, a patch of Texas bluestar. Last year, I marveled at massings of *Amsonia hubrechtii* 'Threadleaf Bluestar' at the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College and was taken by its lush, cloud-like foliage. Like any gardener who sees a wonderful plant, my greedy reaction was, "I *must* have it!" I

As winter winds down, feverish thoughts begin racing through the gardener's mind. It's time to start planning this year's garden. It's time to fix last year's mistakes. It's time to visit the Philadelphia Flower Show. This year, our season of beginnings is all the more thrilling because it's the advent of a new millennium. If there was ever a chance to make a fresh start in the garden, this is it.

First stop is the Flower Show during the week of March 5-12. The 2000 Show's theme of "Gardens for the New Millennium" is sure to inspire you to new heights of creativity. Within this very issue, you'll read about the daring and highly

March: A Season of Beginnings

futuristic Central Feature exhibit, as well as tips from four "Competitive Classes" winners, all of whom have brought home their share of blue ribbons. Another Flower Show story will give you a sense of the history and tradition associated with this venerable event, which was first held in Philadelphia in 1829, two years after the founding of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

Think about it: the Show that we all treasure was up and running long before Charles Dickens wrote *Oliver Twist*; before Abraham Lincoln was president (in fact, Andrew Jackson, the seventh president, had just recently entered office); and even before the large-scale use of rail travel. That first Flower Show was held during the era of the horse and buggy, top hats, and oil lamps. One hundred and seventy-one years later, the Show—now replete with laser lights, full-sized living trees, and other incredible spectacles—is still going strong. Now *that's* tradition.

I'm particularly looking forward to this year's Show because my garden club is entering an exhibit in the Room Class this year and many of us are "newbies" to the Show. Fortunately, we have veterans in our group to guide us clueless, bumbling neophytes along, but I'm still expecting a baptism by fire. And from what other exhibitors have told me, once you've entered the Flower Show, you may easily get hooked for life.

Once you've been jazzed by the exhibits at the Flower Show,

hear it looks incredible in the fall, too, turning yellow or even pumpkin orange.

If you too are on the hunt for new and interesting plants, read the story "Uncommon Beauties" in this issue. This article showcases eight unusual perennials and annuals, all of which can help us break out of the old "coneflower, coreopsis, and impatiens" rut. If you're tired of buying the same plants year in and year out, this article will give you fresh plant ideas and, better yet, the sources for where you can track them down. I, for one, have set my sights on the shamelessly purple Persian shield (*Strobilanthes dyerianus*) mentioned in the story.

Finally, make sure to dig into the Potting Shed for more spring inspiration. Learn the simple pruning technique our Philadelphia Green program uses for rejuvenating forsythia shrubs in the city. Find out about the charming native plant, *Gillenia*, as well as other interesting garden tidbits. And, thanks to suggestions in your letters and email, we've put in another round of timely book reviews. So get in gear, visit the Show, and then hit your backyard with full force. It's spring again and time to indulge in the timeless glories of gardening.

Pete Prown
greenscene@pennhort.org



The Potting Shed

Kenneth R. Robertson



An American Native in England

A Closer Look at *Gillenia*

About three years ago, I attended a close-out sale at a native-plant nursery in upstate New York. The proprietor insisted that I take home the last few pots of *Gillenia stipulata*. Although I had never heard of the plant, she spoke so highly of it that I finally gave in. This past July, I visited Vita Sackville-West's garden at Sissinghurst. There, majestically displayed in the famous white garden was my old friend, *Gillenia*. Who knew this unassuming native made the rounds in such lofty gardening circles?

Previously known by the genus name *Porteranthus*, *Gillenia* has two species worth seeking out. *Gillenia stipulata*, as well as the larger and closely related *G. trifoliata* (the one I saw at Sissinghurst), is known interchangeably by common names "Bowman's root,"

found that the few volunteer seedlings appearing each year are easily weeded out or transplanted elsewhere.

After Indian physic has finished flowering, its foliage is attractive and pest-free all summer, turning a deep burgundy color in autumn. Its brown stems and star-shaped seedheads remain interesting all winter, as well. They are particularly lovely when dusted with snow or covered with a thin glaze of ice. I adore this plant and, at least to me, it's no small irony that it took a visit to England to remind me of the garden worthiness of this charming American native.

—Debbie Moran

Source (for *G. trifoliata*):

Roslyn Nursery
211 Burrs Lane
Dix Hills, NY 11746
(516) 643-9347, (516) 427-0894
www.roslynurseries.com

"American ipecac," and "Indian physic"—the latter name because Native Americans used the root for its curative properties. Like many plants native to the U.S., its garden virtues are largely ignored here at home, yet the plant is well-known and appreciated in England.

Indian physic is a large, shrub-like perennial with red stems and green, toothed leaves, similar to the foliage of a Japanese maple. In late spring, it produces delicate, white, five-petaled flowers on wiry stems. The blossoms are held above the foliage, like a cloud of slender, white butterflies.

A carefree and healthy plant, Indian physic grows well in average, well-drained soil in full sun or light shade, and is hardy from Zones 4 to 8. At maturity, each plant forms a vase-shaped clump approximately 3- to 4-feet tall. While Indian physic will self-sow a bit, I have

GARDEN NET



PLANT OF THE YEAR. The Perennial Plant Association has awarded the title of "Perennial Plant of the Year 2000" to *Scabiosa columbaria* 'Butterfly Blue'. A cultivar of an old-fashioned favorite, this pincushion flower grows reliably in Zones 3-9 in full sun to light shade. This long-blooming perennial sports lavender-blue flowers on 12-to-15-inch stems and you can sustain its bloom period with deadheading. And it's not called 'Butterfly Blue' for nothing—its sweet nectar will encourage butterflies to venture into your garden, adding to its already long list of attributes.

OH DEER. Tired of Bambi turning your hard-earned harvest into a free buffet? Try Bill Adler Jr.'s latest book, *Outwitting Deer* (Lyons Press, softcover, \$14.95). According to the author, "Deer are very, very big squirrels. They invade our yards, eat food intended for others, leave their droppings behind, and try to look so cute."

In this useful guide, Adler helps homeowners find useful repellents, landscape their yards with plants deer dislike, protect their family from Lyme disease, and develop long-term "anti-deer" strategies. With an estimated 15 to 25 million deer in this country alone, this book seems like a handy helper to deal with this at-times aggravating critter.

HONEY OF A HOLLY. In 1990, *Angel Sanchez*, an employee for plant breeder Conard-Pyle Co. in Chester County, was watering some of their Meserve Blue Maid hollies when something remarkable

continued

PHILADELPHIA GREEN'S Secret Forsythia Trick

Do you have a well-established, but somewhat drab forsythia in need of a face-lift? The landscape architects from PHS's Philadelphia Green program have developed a simple pruning trick that results in spectacular spring bloom. Basically, they give it a serious haircut each spring.

"What you're after is a wonderfully arching form covered with flowers, rather than a round 'meatball,'" notes Philadelphia Green project manager, Nancy O'Donnell. "If you have an older plant with lots of woody canes, you can simply cut the whole thing back to about 6 to 12 inches with a hedge clipper or loppers. Then trim off any tears in the bark with a handpruner. This approach works especially well if you have a mass planting of forsythia or a single specimen on the far side of your lawn. For a very large, 6- to 8-foot shrub, however, stick with a more conventional pruning

method of cutting out the older wood each year, while leaving a few one- or two-year-old canes—remember, forsythia flowers on new stems, not old wood."

So when is the right time to cut back your forsythia? Says O'Donnell, "You want to do it as soon as it's done flowering. Another option is to do it earlier, just as the buds swell, which gives you lots of stems for forcing in the house or taking to your church. In either case, once the weather gets warmer and you add a light dressing of fertilizer, the plants will start sending up fresh canes for next year's bloom. We've used this technique at Philadelphia Green sites around the city, such as along John F. Kennedy Boulevard, and the result is always a planting of forsythia that is graceful, balanced, and absolutely stunning."

—Pete Prown



caught his eye—the leaf of a yellow-variegated holly. Ten years later, this charming mutation of nature has gone through numerous field trials and has finally been dubbed *Ilex x meserveae* 'Honey Maid'. The first variegated holly that can tolerate the harsh winters of the North; it features bright red berries and glossy leaves that are either golden or dark green with a buttery fringe.

This *Ilex* stays under 5-feet tall, making it useful as a low hedge, foundation planting, or simply something unique for the garden. 'Honey Maid' is now available in catalogs and garden centers.

MARCH OF PROGRESS.

Finally, the month of **March** has arrived and it will soon be time to sow peas, spinach, radishes, and lettuce seedlings towards the middle of the month. Indoors, plant flats with broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and cabbage seeds, as well as any number of annuals and perennials, to set out in April.

But when is the precise moment to get started working outdoors? In *Jane Pepper's Garden* (Camino Books), the author recommends this simple tip: "Pick up a handful of soil and squeeze it in your hand. If it stays in a ball, don't get the spade out yet. But if it crumbles, it's dry enough to start digging."



Pete Prown

Help Your Community "Plant a Row" For The Hungry

Nothing feels as good as sharing your bounty with others. Whether you plant acres of vegetable gardens or only a small patch of tomatoes, you can make a difference in your community when you "Plant a Row For The Hungry." When you sow your food crops this spring, add an extra row or just an extra plant, and then donate the bountiful harvest to a food pantry, soup kitchen, or other charitable group in your area. "Plant a Row For The Hungry" is a national people-helping-people campaign initiated by the Garden Writers Association of America with funding from the Scotts Company, the HGTV cable network, and the National Garden Bureau. To find out how you can help, call toll-free (877) GWAA-PAR [877-492-2727] or visit the website www.gwaa.org.

Water Factoids

- An acre of corn gives off 4,000 gallons of water per day in evaporation.
- About 48,000 gallons of water are needed to produce the typical American Thanksgiving dinner for eight.
- Water makes up 70% of a tree, 80% of pineapples and corn, and 90% of a tomato.
- Producing an average-size Sunday newspaper requires about 150 gallons of water.

- You can refill an 8 oz. glass of water approximately 15,000 times for the same price as a six-pack of soda pop. Better yet, water has no sugar or caffeine.

Source:
The Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water,
website: www.epa.gov/OW



Let's Hear From You!

What do you think of this issue of *Green Scene*? And which stories did you like...and which ones didn't tickle your fancy? Lend us your compliments, critiques, or complaints, all of which will help us create a better magazine for you.

Send your thoughts to us at the following address: Green Scene Magazine, P.O. Box 7780-1839, Philadelphia, PA 19182-1642. You can also email us at:

greenscene@pennhort.org

The Gardener's Bookshelf



Designing With Plants

by Piet Oudolf with Noel Kingsbury (Timber Press, 160pp, hardcover, \$34.95)

Level: Intermediate to advanced

Pros: Innovative approach to design

Cons: Limited applicability

Like the world of *haute cuisine*, the gardening world is always looking for fresh ways to titillate our tastes. Such is the moody and idiosyncratic work of Dutch designer Piet Oudolf, author of *Designing with Plants*. Like a careful chef, he chooses the best nature has to offer to achieve his emotional and evocative landscape designs. [For more on Oudolf's work, read "Dutch Wonderlands" in the March 1999 issue.]

The topic at hand is primarily herbaceous plants and Oudolf categorizes the plant world according to form, across genera. Perennials and grasses are grouped by their look and function in the gar-

den scheme: spires like *Salvia* and *Calamagrostis* for clarity and order, plumes such as *Solidago* 'Goldenmosa' for softness and connection, and buttons and globes such as *Sanguisorba* and *Echinops* to stand out against more amorphous backgrounds. If you don't know the common names of the plants just mentioned, you'll need to look elsewhere for them, since they are not included, not even in the plant directory in the back of the book.

Inspired by the American Prairie, selected and hybridized by German growers, and installed in the flat expanses of the Eastern Netherlands, Oudolf's plant palette is truly international. Since the emphasis is on structure, he prefers plants that are close to their naturally occurring relatives. He eschews any with overly large flower-to-leaf ratios (ignoring the ones breeders have given almost artificially enormous flowers), and considers color secondary. Because of their overall shape and function, these plants can

do their jobs in black and white if they have to.

This belies the intensely engaging color photographs throughout. Plantings are seemingly shot from within the border and cropped to exclude the larger context, heightening their ensemble effect. Mood is at the forefront, with sections on mysticism, light, harmony, and the sublime. Death, too, has its chapter, with the landscape evoking an aching melancholy.

Even as one worries about the lack of cultural information and hardness zones (and, for goodness sake, how does one weed all those acres of perennials?), it's hard not to be swept away by Oudolf's vision. If you have ever stood transfixed by the low autumn sun as it lights a sea of grasses before you, taken to lands of memory and possibility, you will be transfixed by this book as well.

—Nancy O'Donnell

The Best of Times 1870-1915

by Doris Bickford-Swarthout (Berry Hill Press, 119pp, hardcover, \$25)

Level: All levels

Pros: Interesting peek into our gardening past

Cons: Text needs better editing

"It wasn't a perfect world, but the period between the Civil War and the First World War was perhaps the best time Americans would know."

So begins this wistful, nostalgic reverie on gardening in the late 19th century, a period coinciding with the birth of what we now call "suburbia." Subtitled "Heritage Gardening at Cradle Knoll Farm," the book aims to recall the feel for gardening in that era and, more importantly, teach mod-

THE BEST OF TIMES
1870 - 1915



ern gardeners how to grow heirloom flowers and vegetables today.

The author frequently refers to original gardening books, magazines, and letters for literary insights into this romantic era, however trite they might seem today: "*He who would have beautiful Roses in his garden must have beautiful Roses in his heart. He must love them well and always.*" (Apparently, they didn't need concrete info on deadheading and getting rid of Japanese beetles back then.) Fortunately, the book is illustrated with period photographs, in addition to more recent ones taken in the author's garden at Cradle Knoll, the name of her farm in upstate New York.

If *The Best of Times* suffers from anything, it's a lack of strong editing. The text meanders, has dated grammar and punctuation usage (the word "rose" is inexplicably capitalized throughout), and presents an obtrusive bibliography at the end of each chapter. Still, there's plenty of information about 19th-century gardening and, again, the photographs are a window into another world of horticultural history.

—Pete Prown

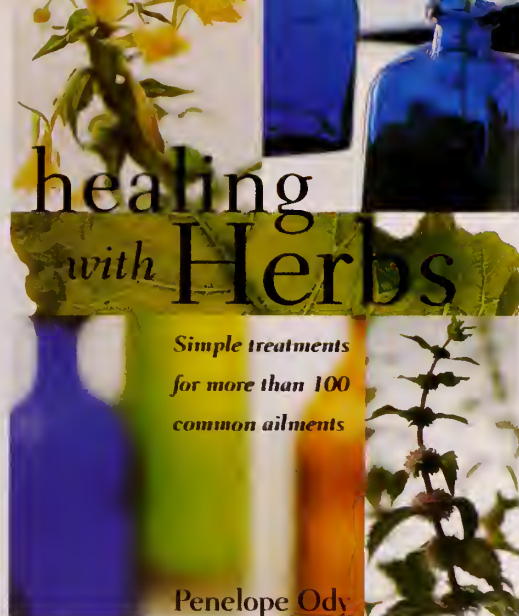
Healing with Herbs

By Penelope Ody (Storey, 160pp, hardcover, \$24.95)

Level: Universal

Pros: Easy-to-use, step-by-step approach

Cons: Some herbs may not be suitable for growing in your area, or sold in a nearby store



We've all experienced the symptoms—sore throat, running nose, coughing, and sneezing. As though it were a Pavlovian response, we head straight for the medicine cabi-

net for that quick fix, opting for Tylenol or Advil over herbal remedies such as echinacea root (purple cone-flower), agrimony, or rosemary. Although Americans are slow to dispense with their shrink-

wrapped pills, as many as two thirds of the world's population still rely on herbal medicine. Author Penelope Ody delves into the deep-rooted

tradition of herbal medicine and offers alternatives to treating common ailments with a holistic approach to overall good health.

Ody traces the use of herbs back to the Egyptians, Greeks, Chinese, Indians, and others. It wasn't until the arrival of modern anatomy and physiology in the 17th century that modern medicine was born. In fact, Western medicine owes its origins to traditional herbal remedies.

Healing with Herbs is chock full of sage advice from cultivating your own herbs to concocting medicinal mixtures to buying the herbs that informs Ody's work as an internationally recognized herbalist and author. Systemic ailments (e.g., heart and circ-

lation; ear, nose, and throat; digestion and liver; and infections) and their treatments are broken down into easy-to-understand sections. Separate chapters are also devoted to male and female reproductive problems, as well as to remedies for ailments that plague infants and children.

With descriptions of 120 popular healing herbs, the author provides readers with an armamentarium of herbs to choose from, always taking heed to safety and care of the individual. Better yet, the organic theme is beautifully captured in the photography and clean design of the pages, with use of vibrant colors bathed in soothing light.

—*Pamela Vu*

ASK A GARDENER



by Hotline Volunteers

Last fall, we dug up our gladiolus bulbs because a gardening friend told us that freezing is harmful to them. When should we replant them and how deeply?

Beth Zawodniak, Princeton, NJ

When to replant? As soon as the frost is out of the ground. How deep? Set the corms 3 to 6 inches deep and 3 to 6 inches apart. In general, glads need full sun to part shade, well-drained sandy loam, and fertilizer. (Any complete fertilizer will be satisfactory. Bone meal, super phosphate, or leaf mold may also be used.) If the season is dry as it was last year, water liberally, especially after the sixth or seventh leaflet begins to develop.

When does one prune black raspberries and grapes? I'm afraid of killing them.

Rebecca Stier, Marcus Hook, PA

Grapes should be pruned while dormant (late winter—January to early March). Properly pruned grapes will have increased vigor and better yields. Prune back to 2-4 canes, containing 20-30 buds in all. The canes may "bleed" sap, but this does not hurt the vine.

For black raspberries, thin out to 3-5 canes and cut back to 36 inches in early spring. In summer, remove spent canes. If these are "everbearing," treat the same way but wait until after frost to remove

fruit-bearing canes. For more info, visit the PHS McLean Library or use an Internet search engine like www.yahoo.com or www.altavista.com to find a how-to site on grape and berry pruning. (Type the terms "pruning, grapes" and "pruning, black raspberries" into the search engines and you should receive numerous suggestions.)

Can you advise me on what herbicide to use in an existing asparagus patch?

Cynthia Ric, Pottstown, PA

Any herbicide that touches the leaves or stalks will kill the asparagus with the exception of Preen, a commercial product available at most garden centers. It is a "pre-emergent," which means it keeps weed seeds from sprouting.

Do you have a question for our garden experts? If so, contact PHS's Hotline staff in the McLean Library, which is open Monday-Friday 9:30-noon. Phone (215) 988-8777 fax (215) 988-8783; email: askagardener@pennhort.org





2000

PHILADELPHIA
FLOWER SHOW



Hi-Tech Horticulture

Looking Ahead to the Futuristic Central Feature

Story by Adam Levine

It's three months before the start of the Philadelphia Flower Show and I'm staring at a scale model "Central Feature," trying to picture what it will look like when all its myriad details are finally fleshed out full size. Drawing on my memories of Flower Shows past, I think myself small and plunge into the eager crowds surging through the Pennsylvania Convention Center's main entrance on opening day, March 5, 2000. Inside, I see the razzle-dazzle of color and glitz I've come to expect from the Show through the years. (con't.)

Hi-TECH Horticulture

First up, to the left, I see an orchid-filled New Year's Eve party in Singapore. To the right is a more bucolic scene: a Bucks County barn and farmyard garden. I hurry ahead, into a greener Philadelphia of the future, with rowhouses, gardens, and shops in the year 2100. Beyond this, I enter a far-out space defined by fabric-draped steel arches, with flying-saucer-like containers filled with fantastic plants hovering in midair and set on the ground. Finally, I'm swept into the main part of the Show, wondering what other marvels await me in the exhibits beyond.

"Gardens for the New Millennium," the theme of the 2000 Flower Show, may not seem like an original concept at this point in time. But when you consider that these Flower Show themes are chosen five years in advance, you might agree that PHS was setting the Y2K trend, rather than jumping on the Y2K bandwagon. "When we came up with this," says Flower Show director and designer Ed Lindemann, "we were tired of watching all the gloom and doom on the nightly news—the ice caps melting, the ozone layer burning up, all of that. The Show will take an upbeat view of what gardening could be in the future. The underlying rule for the exhibitors in the Central Feature was: *think positive*."

A PHILADELPHIA STORY

This positive focus is reflected in the urban greenscape at the heart of the Central Feature. Developed by the landscape architects of PHS's Philadelphia Green program, the half-acre neighborhood represents a utopian view of the city circa 2100. "In this exhibit, everything that's negative has changed," Lindemann says. "The vacant land problem, which is such a big focus of Philadelphia Green today, has been solved. People are using the city, they're living in it and loving it." Ten rowhouses will line the exhibit's main street, all with gardens and five with cut-outs exposing their interiors. Each will reflect the differing interests of their owners, such as hi-tech electronics, sports, music, and food.

In one home, sensual lushes Marilyn Merlot and Joe Fromaggio will have a grape arbor equipped with a hose run-



ning directly from the vines to a wine tap in their wet bar inside. Located under a train trestle, the neighborhood will be enhanced by an organic food restaurant and a cloning shop featuring this offer: "Bring in your loved ones, pets and plants for instant replication! Mothers-in-law...half price!"

A futuristic version of Philadelphia's historic Head House Market at 2nd & Pine Streets will feature a timeline describing an ideal course that Philadelphia Green and the city might follow from now until 2100. "The concept is that urban neighborhoods can be beautiful and green in the 22nd Century," says Kathryn Newland, Philadelphia Green's manager of public landscapes, "if cities take on the vision of Philadelphia Green, that is."

BUCKS COUNTY OLD AND NEW

Flanking this idyllic neighborhood will be smaller exhibits created by three veteran Flower Show exhibitors: Daniel C. Kepich, Robert and Karen Lamsback, and Renny Reynolds. Participants in the Central Feature received technical help from the Show staff in executing the details of their exhibits. Because of this, they are freed from the stress of competing for the various exhibitor awards; instead, they have the added responsibility of creating the part of the Show that most visitors will see first.

"Visitors think we're magicians," says Kepich, owner of Daniel C. Kepich and Associates, a landscape design and maintenance company based in Holicong, PA. "They see the finished product, and most of them have no clue what it takes to get it to that point." The front of Kepich's 40-foot by 80-foot exhibit, "Bucks County: From One Century to the Next," will be a barn and farmyard, complete with an old tractor and corn crib. As visitors walk around the back side, the barn will become a modern house with a gazebo, patio, garden, and state-of-the-art furnishings.

Most exhibitors put together their Flower Show gardens on-site: growing the plants in containers or burlap in greenhouses, transporting them to the Convention Center and, using mulch to hide the pots or root balls—creating their artificial landscapes a few days before Show time. For the first time this year, Kepich is trying to create two small, but complete, gardens in his greenhouse in Holicong. If all goes as planned, he hopes to move them, soil and all, right into their place at the Show. Built in wooden boxes, they measure roughly 80 and 160 square feet each; the larger of the two weighing close to a ton. "We're pushing the envelope with this," Kepich admits. "Sometimes you hit home runs, but then there's that gray area where you don't know exactly what will happen."

Helping in this push, as they have at every Show for the past 15 years, is Kepich's wife, Susan, and his two children. Daughter Beth, 18, "has been doing it since she could walk," Kepich says. Son Chris, 21, has worked the Show since he was six, when one of his tasks was moving mulch with a small front-end loader. "The kids usually get more attention at the Show than I do," says their father, his voice wavering between envy and pride.

PARTY TILL YOU DROP

A three-party exhibit created by Lamsback Floral Decorators, a Philadelphia firm owned by Robert and Karen Lamsback, will feature table settings and lush floral displays at three make-believe New Year's Eve celebrations: at Singapore's Raffles Hotel in



Bronze Boy with Flute by
Else Martinus Chapman



The Ferryman
by David Goode



The Ballerina by Susan Luery



Borghese Jar
by Lunaform

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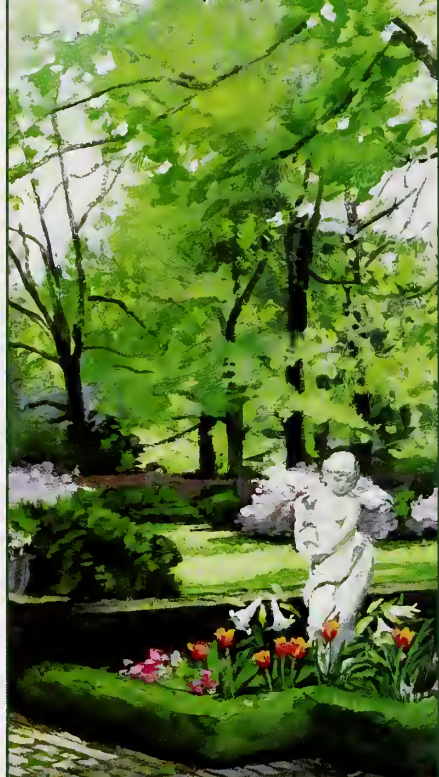
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Hi-TECH Horticulture

1922, at the Hotel Grosvenor in London at the end of 1945, and in a Philadelphia penthouse overlooking the statue of William Penn as the city rings in 2001. The tomb of King Tutankhamen was discovered shortly before 1922, and its Egyptian style inspired much of what we call Art Deco, a style that will be incorporated into the Raffles Hotel scenario. The Lamsbacks visited Singapore last summer and took dozens of pictures of the Raffles Hotel to help them recreate its look in their exhibit. This party will be decorated with the orchids for which Singapore is famous. "Even the airport is filled with orchids," Bob Lamsback says. "It's like a flower show in itself."

The 1945 London party will be more staid, using formal rose-filled arrangements, a crystal chandelier, and heavy furniture and decorations. At the table will be evidence of that era's great leaders: Churchill, Eisenhower, MacArthur, and DeGaulle, all of them relaxing after six years of global warfare. The rest of the guests for the 12-seat table had not been confirmed by press time, but Lindemann hinted that a few famous movie stars might be invited. "Platinum" will be the theme of the Philadelphia party, with ultra-modern floral decor, furnishings and dinnerware. The penthouse will have a view of the William Penn statue at the top of City Hall, with lighting effects creating the feel of a laser show and fireworks.

IN THE YEAR 2225

"A container garden of the next millennium" is how Renny Reynolds, owner of Renny—The Perennial Farm in Wrightstown, PA, describes his far-out contribution to the Central Feature. The framework of this exhibit will be a series of overlapping 15-foot to 30-foot tubular steel arches, rising out of artificial boulders. Panels of reflective fabric will hang above the arches, and concave containers up to 4 feet across will be suspended from wires and set at ground level. Reynolds says, "I'm looking to create a futuristic greenhouse with the artificial lighting fading in and out, bouncing off the fabric panels, and highlighting the plants." Reynolds plans to make the plants every bit as fantastic as their setting. "I'm aiming for bizarrely shaped and colored specimens, things like variegated

pinus and contorted evergreens," he says. "It will be a garden about shapes and textures. I hope to bring some tropical plants that many people have never seen before, like variegated *Furcraea*, *Sansevieria cylindrica*, huge specimens of crinums 6- to 7-feet across, variegated clivias, and unusual specimens of *Pandanus* with sharp twisted leaves that look like yuccas on drugs."

He expects to have at least one container of "extreme" begonias—"perhaps *Begonia gigantea*, which has foot-long leaves and doesn't even look like a begonia from a distance—that is, if I can bring it into bloom by March." After talking to Renny, I think of his "ifs" and of all the other "ifs" I've heard from the other exhibitors. I also think of the myriad "ifs" represented by that crude model of the Central Feature and marvel that, year after year, come March, the exhibitors manage to work a kind of alchemy, taking most of these "ifs," and turning them into a wonderful reality. That's the magic of the Philadelphia Flower Show. ♦

Adam Levine, of Rose Valley, PA, has been attending the Flower Show since 1984. A member of the PHS Publications and Education advisory committees, writer for *Green Scene*, and a contributing editor to *Garden Design* magazine, he may again be entering his fancy-leaf geraniums in the competitive horticulture classes, still searching for an elusive blue ribbon.

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AMERICA'S OLDEST AUCTION HOUSE, WHERE THE WORLD TRADES ITS TREASURES.

Titled "Musée d'Art Moderne," this small-niche entry won a blue ribbon for Alice Farley of the Wissahickon Garden Club.





Ira Beckoff

Bringing Home The **BLUE**

Flower Show Veterans Offer Their
Secret Tips on Exhibiting

Story by Judith C. McKeon

Do you ever wonder how the top exhibitors in the Philadelphia Flower Show's "Competitive Classes" manage to cajole hardy plants into out-of-season bloom, cultivate their houseplants to perfection, and orchestrate the spectacular performances of winter-flowering tropicals? What special requirements are necessary, not only to trick Mother Nature, but to catch the notice of the judging committee and earn a much-coveted blue ribbon? Here, we interview four top exhibitors—Lee Raden, Peggy Bowditch, Alice Farley and Ray Rogers—each of whom generously offer their expert growing and grooming tips, as well as tales on how they navigated their way through exciting horticulture classes and brought home the blue.

Like a Rock. Lee Raden has been exhibiting at the Philadelphia Flower Show since 1966—that's 33 shows—during which he has swept the rock garden, primula, and species bulb classes, stunning judges, exhibitors, and visitors alike with his exquisite gems such as *Narcissus bulbocodium* 'Tenuifolius' and *Primula* × *loiseleurii* 'Lismore Yellow'. Lee is a plant lover, dare I say a fanatic, who maintains his enthusiasm because he finds that "there's always something new, like the rare South African plants now available through seed exchanges."

Lee loves the remarkable little alpine and rock-crevice plants that he grows from seed. It's a long-term commitment because germination often requires two to three years followed by another five years of growing on to flowering size. He notes, "Forcing species material is an art form. You must look at them every day and ask yourself, 'Are they too wet, too dry?'" In the game of tricking plants to bloom out of season, a coldframe is standard equipment. Like other exhibitors, Lee uses coldframes and the deeper bulb frames (approximately 4-1/2 feet) for both protecting seedlings and chilling pots of hardy bulbs, shrubs, and perennials.

Providing proper conditions in which the mountain species thrive is Lee's greatest challenge, especially keeping the alpine cool—a Herculean task during our hot, humid Philadelphia summers. Lee mitigates the extreme heat and cold in his 8-foot by 22-foot "lean-to" alpine house, which is equipped with evaporative cooling fans and protected by 62% shade cloth from April 1 to October 30. Lee also recommends growing alpine plants and species bulbs undisturbed in their pots for at least one year. The 4-inch and 6-inch pots of treasures that Lee exhibits are eventually

dressed for the Show. He sleeves plastic pots in plain, clean terra cotta ones and adds a top dressing of crushed rock for a simple, elegant look.

After nurturing *Draba longisiliqua* for nine years from seed, Lee entered it in several rock garden classes and won both the prestigious Doretta Klaber Award as well as the PHS Ribbon in 1999. But then Lee Raden always pulls off the most amazing alpine gem exhibits and is frequently awarded the blue for his efforts.

Lee advises prospective exhibitors "to join a plant society or garden club, attend its educational meetings, meet others who share your enthusiasm for specific

plants, get involved with seed exchanges, and start growing your favorite plants." Committed to sharing seed, bulbs, and plants with other growers, his adage "share it or lose it" translates into a true gardener's spirit of generosity.

Doing It Her Own Way. A self-proclaimed gambler, Peggy Bowditch follows "the seat-of-your-pants approach" to cultivating and exhibiting plants. Peggy joined the Wissahickon Garden Club in 1968 and was initiated into her 24-year love affair with the Philadelphia Flower Show by her late mentor Susie Walker. Like Lee Raden, Peggy is a specialty grower noted for exhibiting the rare and difficult species such as the heavenly



A gorgeous *Draba longisiliqua* grown by Lee Raden. After starting it from seed, he waited nine years until it was ready for the Flower Show.



This *Laurentia minuta*—here, in the process of being groomed—won Peggy Bowditch an Outstanding Blue ribbon in 1999 for “rock garden plant in bloom.”

Meconopsis grandis, the Himalayan blue poppy. Peggy is the only exhibitor ever to enter this singular beauty successfully at the Philadelphia Flower Show, where it always takes a blue. With no greenhouse, how does she do it? Peggy considers her methods “unorthodox.” *Meconopsis* species survive because the pots make the trip to her summer home in Maine where the cool night temperatures provide a more hospitable environment and gives the sensitive blue poppies a fighting chance.

Peggy always keeps an eye out for a novelty plant that she can enter in the Show such as the little gem *Laurentia minuta* with which she won an outstanding blue for “rock garden plant in bloom” in 1999. Typically, she finds unusual plants on trips. She also orders species from specialty growers, such as Siskyou Rare Plant Nursery in Oregon. By Halloween, her four coldframes are jammed with pots of hardy bulbs and perennials, which Peggy then chills for at least two months. In January, she begins hauling them indoors where they will be coaxed into “spring” growth. Timing is always tricky for perennials and shrubs,

compounded by the fact that light is at a premium in the winter months. Without the benefit of greenhouse growing conditions, Peggy’s greatest challenge is getting enough light to her plants. Her unconventional, low-tech methods require “a juggling act,” whereby Peggy *schleps* plants all winter, carrying pots back and forth from the cool (50°F) plant room onto sunny windowsills in search of the best light. She also keeps plants under growing lights for 16 to 24 hours a day.

Like other exhibitors Peggy also acquires great ideas by studying other entries and exhibits in the Flower Show. She also cautions “if you’ve got something different, wait until it looks wonderful.” Once a plant has been shown, it becomes public domain. Indeed, imitation can be rewarding. “From Ray Rogers, I stole the idea of forcing *Deutzia crenata* var. *nakaiana* ‘Nikko,’ a landscape groundcover which forces beautifully for the Show.” ‘Nikko’ secured her a blue ribbon. And while visiting the Chelsea Flower Show in England, she got the idea for forcing daphnes. To some exhibitors only a first counts, but Peggy

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Bowditch is no prima donna about her awards. Her motto: "a ribbon is a ribbon."

A Class Act. Unique among the exhibitors I interviewed, Alice Farley enters both horticulture and artistic classes. "I don't think of the artistic classes as flower arranging, but as designing a sculpture. Horticulture and artistic entries provide different satisfactions."

Alice is a natural at both and took the Grand Sweepstakes Trophy for the greatest number of points in all Competitive Classes in 1999. A landscape architect, she has been exhibiting at the Show for 18 years. "The first time I entered, four or five plants took blue ribbons and my interest was peaked. It was dumb luck."

Alice exhibits primarily because she wants to share her unusual plants. Like Peggy Bowditch, Alice works hard to win blue ribbons without the benefit of a greenhouse. One year she won a first for a windowsill of Mediterranean plants. "I had to get up every hour-and-a-half all night long to spray the plants. Without having a greenhouse I came close to mimicking it. It's like caring for an infant." She acknowledges that although everyone's growing conditions are quite different, "we all produce Flower Show-quality plants." A wall of south-facing windows provides excellent light and she also adds supplemental lighting for a total of 18 to 24 hours. Alice uses spotlights to bring plants into bloom or to get a flush of new growth in January and February. In terms of the basics, she advises novices to "make sure the plant blooms at the right time, pinch early unless the plant is within inches of the lights, and carefully look for insects—bugs are a no-

no at the Show."

Like other exhibitors, Alice appreciates details important in aesthetic presentation. "The plant should look fresh and be presented in a complementary pot. It is the whole package that sticks out as superior." She is particularly keen on the right top dressing—for example, she used black river stone to set off her *Juncus* "because that plant grows in water and the shiny river stone gives the appearance of a wet surface."

Alice also recommends paying attention to how people display their plants.

influence. "I was inspired by John Swan who entered an *Arisaema* in the novice class one year and it took a blue. It was breathtaking. *Arisaemas* are one of my great successes in the Show."

Ray has been exhibiting for 10 years and attributes his inspiration to Janet Welsh and Sylvia Lin. [For more on Sylvia Lin, see "In The Spotlight" in the February issue of *The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society News*—editor] "I was a passer for 10 years before I ever entered. One of the plants Sylvia exhibited that really got me thinking about pre-



A peek inside Bowditch's overflowing refrigerator of bulbs, just before the Flower Show.

Peggy Bowditch

"The people who exhibit at the Flower Show are generous, encouraging, and knowledgeable. Spend time talking to them. Check out the exhibits, take notes, and observe the consistent winner's habits. And don't forget about transportation. If you are entering more than five plants, you'll need help. My mother helps me."

Some of the "cool and difficult" plants that Alice has exhibited include *Ochna serrulata*, the Mickey Mouse plant, which she grows as a loose topiary. "It usually draws attention because it always has Mickey Mouse ears on it." Like most gardeners, Alice admits, "I killed quite a few plants before I figured out what I could grow." Her philosophy about exhibiting: "It is intuitive and, when you're successful, it's like breathing."

Ray's Weeds. A trendsetter, Ray Rogers is noted for exhibiting uncommon woodland plants. Although he is probably responsible for the existence of the *Arisaema* (Jack-in-the-pulpit) class, he is quick to name his

sensation was *Begonia petasitifolia*. It was like a piece of sculpture. I also have endless admiration for what the estates can do. That *Wisteria floribunda* 'Alba' entered by Dodo Hamilton last year was stunning."

Ray has no compunction about exhibiting plants that local horticulturist Charles Cresson refers to as "Ray's weeds," such as the noxious, Jack-in-the-pulpit-looking *Pinellia ternata*. An *Arisaema* relative, Ray rescued it from a nursery dump and exhibited it in bloom with an *Arisaema* in the Double Your Pleasure Class (different genera within the same plant family). The pair won a blue. His inspiration for entering weeds: "One year Susie Walker brought in a dandelion in a round bonsai pot. Perfectly formed, one flower; beautifully presented and grown. Distinctive."

Distinctiveness also applies to Ray's entries. Ray is determined to catch the

attention of the judges, often with striking foliage. He has a knack for recognizing good Show material. "When I see an unusual plant like *Syneilesis palmata*, I picture it in a pot. With an umbrella leaf that looks like a mayapple, it can't lose. I put three crowns in a bulb pan and give it 6-7 weeks of cold. It looked like a forest of umbrellas, but it was also dumb luck." Ray does have access to greenhouses that provide temperature-controlled growing conditions and lots of light.

A master at grooming, Ray recommends "lavishing endless care on the details. Grooming is the least glamorous, but the most important aspect of exhibiting. Anything that interferes, get rid of it: faded flowers, dead leaves, dirt, clashing pot." Year-round grooming is essential for some plants such as *Pelargonium abrotanifolium* for which Ray won the Edith Wilder Scott Award in 1998. "I had

Two of Ray Rogers' flawless winners: *Syneilesis palmata* and *Deutzia gracilis* 'Nikko' [inset].



photos by Ray Rogers



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Top: Alice Farley's dizzying *Juncus effusus* 'Spiralis' (corkscrew rush).

Bottom: Lee Raden's perfect primrose, *Primula x loiseleurii* 'Lismore Yellow.'



been grooming that plant forever. Over the course of five years, I probably took 5,000 leaves off of that plant. I think that the judges recognized that." Ray's last word on grooming: "Always look again."

Final Tips. While the experts acknowledged that exhibiting is a game played by the rules laid out in the Show schedule—"our Bible," in Lee Raden words—they enliven the contest with individual flare, honed skills and a delight in the challenge. Ray Rogers adds, "The Flower Show is the cream of what good growers can do. It's great to be a part of that. You just don't get that fever anywhere else. The amazing thing is that there are thousands of people who look at every plant in the Competitive Classes."

For these expert players, the Philadelphia Flower Show represents the

major leagues where the top contenders compete for the highest honors, challenge past glories, and come back to play next season. Peggy Bowditch sums up the general feeling expressed by these experts: "I'm proud to be an exhibitor at the Philadelphia Flower Show. Knowing that you have a plant in the best Flower Show in the world is simply a thrill." ♦

Judith C. McKeon is freelance writer, the author of *The Encyclopedia of Roses*, *Gardening With Roses* and a contributor to *The American Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants*. A consultant with her own business, the Garden Advisor, she lives and gardens in Philadelphia. Contact Judy at: ripka@surfree.com.

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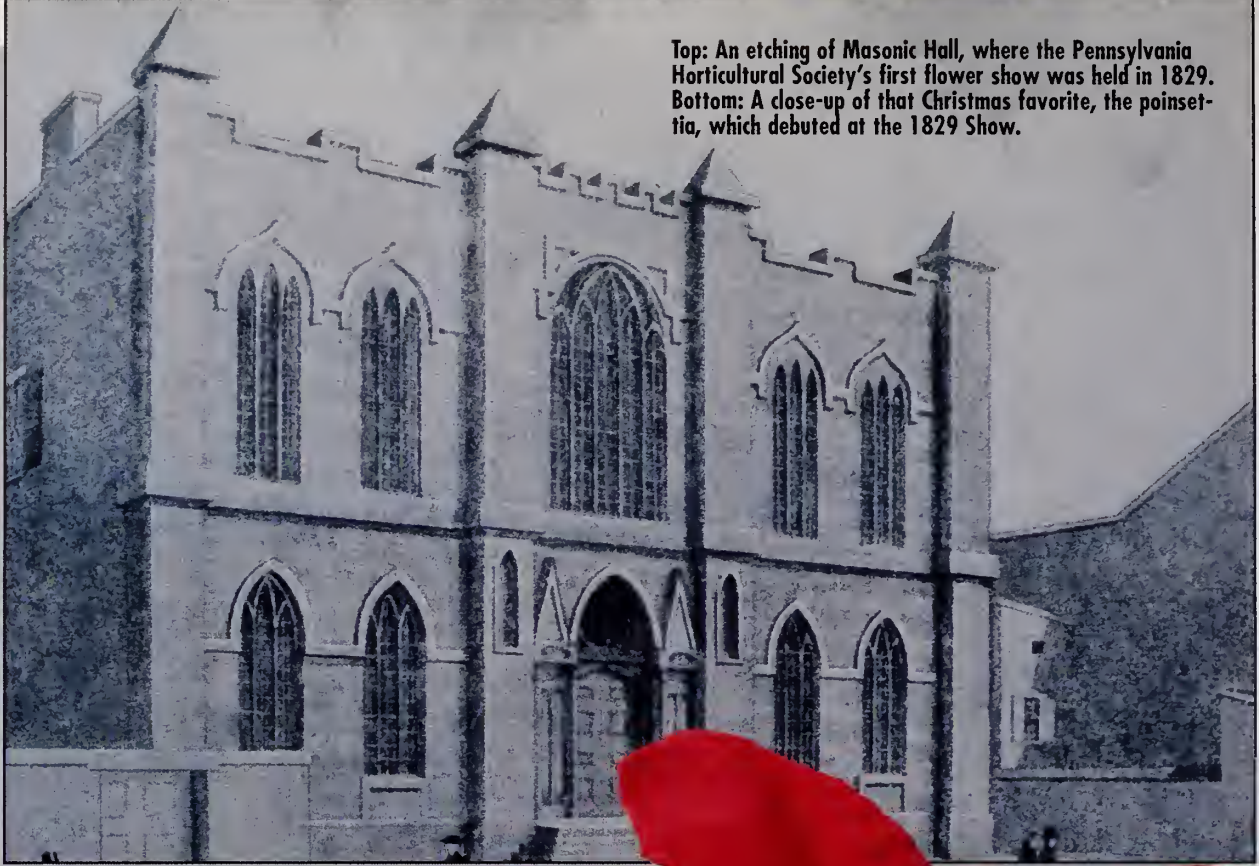
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Top: An etching of Masonic Hall, where the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's first flower show was held in 1829.
Bottom: A close-up of that Christmas favorite, the poinsettia, which debuted at the 1829 Show.





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PHILADELPHIA
FLOWER SHOW

YESTERDAY'S FLOWER SHOW

A Quick Trip Into Philadelphia's Flower Show History

Story and Photography by Wilbur Zimmerman

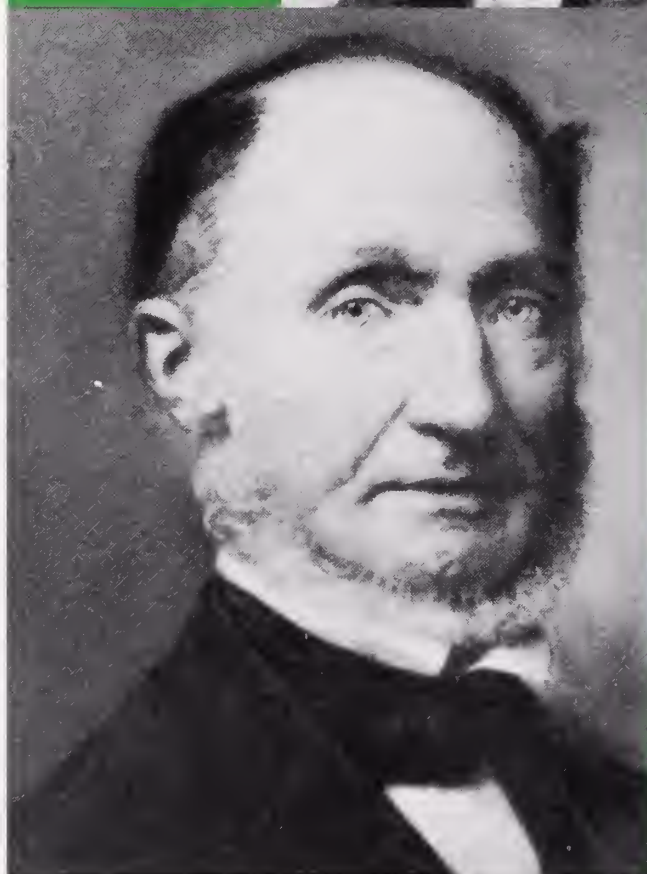
While peering into the future at the beginning of a new millennium, we cannot help but be aware of our history. James Boyd, president of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society from 1918 to 1929, said in the preface to the book *PHS History 1827-1927*, "A people who care nothing for the record of their past achievements are not likely to achieve much worth recording for the future."

In light of our current achievements—the ever-popular Philadelphia Flower Show, Philadelphia Green, our acclaimed McLean Library, and *Green Scene* magazine—a brief look through the pages of history reaffirms PHS' role in bringing greater recognition to horticulture and the support of community endeavors. It is because of this 171-year tradition that we now look back upon the early years of the glorious Philadelphia Flower Show with both pride and fondness.

Right: Zaccheus Collins, president of PHS at the time of its initial flower show.



Left: Robert Buist's successful seed-catalog business helped spread the popularity of the poinsettia during the 1830s and he is also credited with the introduction of the plant to Europe.



YESTERDAY'S

those engaged in plant commerce.) Although it wasn't until 1835 that women were made members, as history clearly bears out, they would become *very* prominent exhibitors at the Show.

The plants shown at the first Flower Show included *Aster muscosa*, which "...diffused a musky scent as powerful as that imparted by any animal from Tonquin or Thibet"; *Magnolia macrophylla* "with its flowers four feet in circumference"; peonies described as "Paeonias from China, rare and of delightful fragrance"; and "Testudinaria elephantipes, or Hottentot bread, supposed to be upwards of 100 years old." (This latter plant—actually a woody climbing perennial from South Africa—is now known as *Dioscorea elephantipes* and is also commonly called "Elephant's foot.")

Other plants and trees presented were pelargoniums, carnations, lilies, double-white pomegranate, "The Coffee Tree of Arabia," and sago palm. Clearly, the Philadelphia gardeners of that era were highly sophisticated and had access to an interesting array of specimens.

The Poinsettia. One of the very earliest contributions of the Society has actually never received its proper due. The ubiquitous symbol of the Christmas holiday season, the poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) was exhibited for the first time at the Philadelphia Flower Show in June 1829. In the minutes, it was written, "The new Euphorbia, with bright scarlet *bracteas*, or floral leaves, [was] presented to the Bartram Collection by Mr. Poinsett, United States Minister to Mexico." Bartram's nursery in Philadelphia was then under the care of Robert Carr—a PHS member and exhibitor of the plant at the first Show—who was married to John Bartram's granddaughter, Ann.

In the *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* of 1836 (Volume 10), it was noted that Mr. Poinsett had the plant shipped to him in Charleston, NC, and some were later sold to Robert Buist, owner of a noted seed-catalog business in Philadelphia and a very active member of PHS. It was Buist who introduced the plant to the trade and "his sale of the double form [of poinsettia] is said to have been the first transaction of the kind accomplished by ocean telegraph." A native of Scotland, Buist originally trained at the Edinburgh Botanic Garden. In 1834, he sent the

The 1829 Show. Less than two years after the founding of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in 1827, the organization produced its first Flower Show. It took place on June 6th at the Masonic Hall on Chestnut Street, where it stayed until 1841. With Zaccheus Collins as its president, the Society's first public exhibit featured fruits, vegetables, flowers, and

other plants. By awarding prizes to plant specimens of horticultural excellence, the Show attracted a diverse array of plants. It was noted in the minutes that the "Brilliant exhibition owes its merit to the individual patronage and contributions of gentlemen amateurs and professional cultivators." (The latter designation included working gardeners and

FLOWER SHOW

poinsettia to the famous Scottish garden, thereby introducing this Christmas favorite to Europe. And just think, it all started at the Philadelphia Flower Show.

The Next 60 Years. The following decades featured a large number of domestic and international plant introductions at the Show. As early as 1842, members Caleb Cope (PHS president from 1841-51) and George Pepper were enthusiastic collectors of exotic orchids, while John B. Smith and Richard Fettes were cacti enthusiasts. Gerhard Schmitz, meanwhile, was considered the leading dahlia grower. A sampling of the plants brought for exhibition throughout the years indicates the vitality and strong interest in horticulture. Such plants included ardisias, euphorbias, hibiscus, aristolochias, abutilons, aloes, achimenes, bouvardias, ericas, jasminums, plumbagos, azaleas, and calceolarias.

The library, set up in 1833, flourished in spite of setbacks, including fires. Until the Civil War, the Society prospered, but following the conflict there was a lull in the activities of the organization. After 1871, however, there appeared to be a rejuvenation when the commercial elements of the organization began to be more active. That, combined with the Society's participation in the Centennial Exposition of 1876 held in Fairmount Park, appeared to provide the right stimulus. Membership soon leveled off at about 800 until the year 1900, when it rose to 1,344 and the library had increased its shelf space to accommodate 2,300 volumes.

Into the 20th Century. The Exhibition of 1900 was held in Horticultural Hall from November 13-17. Exhibits included chrysanthemums, palms, ferns,

dracaenas, maranthas, begonias, cyclamens, geraniums, and anemones, while a gold medal went to Mrs. George B. Wilson for her corner display of "George Washington sago palm, foliage plants, and orchids." The Philadelphia Flower Show of March 1926—held in cooperation with the Florist's Club at the Commercial Museum—had a paid attendance of 45,000 at 50¢ per admission. The previous year, the Show had drawn 80,000 visitors, though no admission fee had been charged on that occasion.

In May 1927, PHS undertook another major event when it hosted the American Orchid Society's 2nd national exhibition at Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park. The attendance was extraordinary, approaching a staggering 110,000 visitors. PHS had gone all out to help make the event a success and it was pronounced the most beautiful show ever produced in this country. Other large events that year included the June show of roses, peonies, and other spring flowers (16,800 visitors); the Dahlia Show (26,720 visitors); and the Hardy Chrysanthemum Show.

Three years earlier, in 1924, the Philadelphia Flower Show, Inc. (PFS)—a not-for-profit corporation of horticulturists including W. Atlee Burpee, J. Liddon Pennock Sr., Fred Mitchell, and Alfred Campbell—was set up and ran the Show for 40 years. In 1965, PFS decided against putting on the Spring Flower Show, as it was then known, due to renovation of the Philadelphia Civic Center. Sensing an opportunity, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society—under the guidance of executive director Ernesta Ballard—re-launched the Show under its own auspices. The organization eventual-

ly gathered enough experience and courage to bid against PFS for the right to put on the Show, finally winning the city's approval and beginning full management of the Show in 1968. In one fell swoop, the Philadelphia Flower Show had been put on the path to its present-day glory. But that, of course, is a story for another day. ❖

Wilbur Zimmerman has been a chair of the Flower Show executive committee, chair of PHS Council, a member of Council for 19 years, and a member of the PHS judging panel. He's also participated as an accredited judge for the American Orchid Society since 1955. Now in his nineties, Wilbur is still an active contributor to *Green Scene*, both as a writer and committee member (in fact, he was chair of the committee that helped launch the magazine in 1972).

Finally, in a fascinating footnote to this article, Wilbur recently noted that he once met the Mrs. George B. Wilson mentioned in the article, back in 1936. She won a Flower Show prize...exactly 100 years ago.

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VACANT LAND

Imagine more than 700 football fields lined in a row or a 50-mile stretch of unsightly urban decay. Both of these images convey how much "vacant land" actually exists in the city of Philadelphia. Everything from waist-high weeds and discarded tires to broken refrigerators and trash piles make their home in the more than 30,900 vacant lots in the city. Building on its foundation of community greening, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green program is setting its sites on turning these lots into fresh green palettes on which neighborhoods in coming decades can rebuild and flourish.

Story by Pamela Vu

A Little City History

Philadelphia's history is truly America's history. From the time of the earliest settlers, people have been drawn to the city's diversity, promise of tolerance, and better way of life. With the advent of industrialization in the early 19th century, Philadelphia became a thriving center of commerce and industry. Philadelphia's prosperity attracted immigrants from Europe as well as African-Americans from the southeastern states to the city. From its very beginning up through the present, Philadelphia has been greatly shaped by its inhabitants and the niches they carve for themselves.

Although Philadelphia's population had peaked to over two million by mid-century, the '50s marked the rise of "suburbia" and the decline of the inner city. While economic and population growth once occurred within the city limits,

PHILADELPHIA GREEN HELPS FIGHT THE CITY'S BIGGEST PROBLEM



beginning in the 1950s, the urban frontier began to reach outward to the areas surrounding Philadelphia.

Like other industrial cities—Detroit, St. Louis, and Baltimore—Philadelphia struggled to keep pace with a changing economy. Manufacturing jobs moved to southern and western states, leading to the permanent erosion of the city's industrial base. At the same time, better highways, GI loans, low-mortgage homes, and new information technologies made it easy, even desirable, for people to leave the city for the bustling 'burbs.

As jobs dried up in the inner city, more and more of its residents joined the exodus to the suburbs. The neighborhoods around the mills and factories, once teeming with hard-working citizens, were abandoned. As the suburbs around it now flourish, post-industrial Philadelphia has become increasingly unrecognizable from its glory days; its neighborhoods now dotted with thou-

sands of lots of what has become known as "vacant land."

The Facts on Vacant Land

Over the years, abandoned residential and industrial buildings slowly decayed, were demolished, and have become vacant lots. For the first time in the city's history, local government has had to confront a mounting inventory of vacant land.

According to the Philadelphia Planning Commission's report *Vacant Land in Philadelphia* (1995), Philadelphia's population decreased by more than 23% between 1950 and 1990, a loss of 486,028 people (bringing it to its lowest level since 1910). The hardest-hit area, Lower North Philadelphia, lost 60% of its population. Conversely, the population of the outlying, semi-suburban Far Northeast increased by an astonishing 500%.

And once people leave the inner city, they rarely look back. As people move

out, property values plummet, and those who stay must deal with their declining communities. As the downward spiral of deterioration and abandonment spins out of control, even the most resilient find it hard to stay. Perhaps most detrimental of all is the feeling of despair that festers in these neighborhoods, robbing them of their vitality and spirit.

If this all appears too gloomy, we have only to look at the statistics to see the magnitude of the problem. Today, there are over 30,900 vacant residential lots in Philadelphia's neighborhoods. There are also nearly 23,000 abandoned houses, which are the precursors to vacant land.

A Bright Spot in the Rubble

At the same time the city was heading into its rapid decline, a new program was emerging from the rubble. Begun in 1974, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green program works with neighborhood groups, organizations, and city agencies to green city blocks, create community vegetable gardens and parks, and spruce up Philadelphia's downtown areas. Slowly, people began to take notice of the city's changing landscape for the greener and saw first hand, the positive impact of greening in Philadelphia's neighborhoods.

In the 1980s, Philadelphia Green launched its "Greene Countrie Towne" program, emphasizing the connection between community, greening, and quality-of-life issues. "People in other neighborhoods took for granted what we had to work for," recalls Iris Brown, community leader of Norris Square Greene Countrie Towne. "We daydreamed about things we weren't supposed to. But through community gardening things started to change and our neighborhood changed—if one person on the block planted a tree, then another person wanted to plant one. It was contagious. We also use gardens to teach children about their heritage and to instill ethnic pride. I know it's a cliché, but we cultivate more than gardens; we foster hope. And with aid from other agencies we're better able to tackle other issues like vandalism, crime, and drugs." A constant in the changing urban landscape, Philadelphia Green has from the outset recognized the resourcefulness of people and channeled this energy into improving the quality of life in neighborhoods.



Twenty-five years, eight Greene Countrie Townes, and more than 3,000 greening projects later (which include community gardens, street tree plantings, revitalizing parks, and outreach and training programs), Philadelphia Green is seen as the model urban greening program for other cities. However, despite its strong partnerships in low-income neighborhoods, Philadelphia Green and other local organizations found that even with a large number of new gardens under development, it was becoming increasingly difficult to have an impact on the explosion of vacant lots.

"A few years ago, we started to realize the overwhelming problem of vacant land in the neighborhoods where we were working," says Philadelphia Green Community Greening manager Mike Groman. "We saw that greening alone couldn't offset the rate at which vacant lots were increasing. At that point, we decided we had to take a more comprehensive approach." The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's study, *Urban Vacant Land: Issues and Recommendations* (1995)—funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts—looked at the problem nationwide and offered a model of how communities can reclaim this land, which led to work with community development corporations (CDCs) and a model vacant land management program established in Philadelphia's New Kensington neighborhood.

New Kensington Open Space Management

New Kensington has its share of vacant land. To date, there are over 1,100 vacant lots covering more than 37 acres or nearly 15% of the neigh-

borhood. But this neighborhood is making a comeback in a profound way.

Sandy Salzman has a personal and professional interest in this area: she's lived in New Kensington all her life and is also the executive director of the New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC). "CDCs initially were set up to deal with housing and renovation issues," explains Salzman. "But it wasn't until we did our own strategic planning called 'New Kensington 2000' that we found out what the residents really wanted. They were worried not just about housing, but about crime, safety, schools and, the biggest problem of all, vacant land. We found that people would send friends far out of their way just to avoid vacant land. It was a wake-up call for us."

In three years, NKCDC—in partnership with Philadelphia Green and funded by the City's Office of Housing and Community Development, the William Penn Foundation and, for the most part, The Pew Charitable Trusts—has transformed about 540 lots (or 49%) of vacant land in this neighborhood into maintained open spaces, community gardens, parks, playgrounds, and side yards.

Salzman adds, "I actually saw a man exercising a pony in one of the cleaned lots. It's unbelievable. We've made some headway, but the challenge will be to continue our work into the future. What we'd like to do is work with other neighborhoods to help manage vacant lots and get paid for our work, as a way of continuing to support what we're doing in New Kensington."

In a nutshell, the program works because it manages vacant land in the interim, while planning for its future reuse. In the short term, it cleans and greens vacant lots so they are no longer detriments to the neighborhood. Long-term plans are to transform vacant land into tangible neighborhood benefits that suit the community's needs, be it new housing, parking areas, or community open spaces. It also seeks technical assistance and resources from partners and other supporters.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Executive Vice President Blaine Bonham points out that while greening serves a role in the vacant land dialogue, it is by no means the be-all and end-all solution to the complex problem. "What we are trying to do is show the city that it needs to embrace the issue of vacant land and work with CDCs and other neighborhood-based organizations to manage it. Then we'll work directly with them and neighborhood residents to develop green spaces appropriately. Our approach has evolved to one of broad neighborhood planning and revitalization. In essence, we're working with CDCs to build a vacant land management system."

This past spring, a series of vacant land management reports published by the Society bring home this point: *Over time, with a holistic approach, the city can maintain vacant land, do it cost-effectively, and even generate revenue.*

What's the Hold-Up?

If published reports agree that the city needs to invest in managing vacant land and can accomplish this in a fiscally sound manner, then what's holding everything back?

Herein lies the problem: the city is still using outdated policies and practices of land acquisition based on a "growth concept" of pre-World War II. Now, with "undercrowding" and land abandonment, many of these properties have low market value and thus, generate little tax revenue. So, for the city to hold on to the idea that vacant land in neighborhoods faced with de-industrialization and population loss will someday become valuable is wishful thinking and is crippling the process of acquiring land for redevelopment and reuse. Indeed, many private lots have been abandoned by their tax-owing owners, leaving the city with no revenue. Only if the city condemns the property (or has a valid reason, such as back taxes, to seek ownership of the lot) can it assume legal responsibility for demolishing unsafe structures or "cleaning and greening." Otherwise, the city cannot reuse the land without the owner's consent.

For those who want to acquire city-owned land, the system certainly doesn't make it easy. You have to go through a labyrinthine process, which involves decisions from several city agencies and in many cases, years of waiting.

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mendations from experts, including those at PHS, have been offered to make vacant land more accessible. They include having one agency, rather than several, involved in the review process, to setting up a database to track all vacant land requests, to stan-

dardizing the application procedure. Taking a stance on land acquisition reform is John Kromer, executive director of the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) under former Mayor Ed Rendell. "We want people to have immediate access to the land, so they can begin to improve it," says Kromer. "At the very least, we want to issue licenses promptly so that people can legally clear and clean up a site. Although they won't own the land just yet, they can work on it while awaiting the city's decision." The

city's OHCD has been a major supporter of greening and, through an annual Block Grant first made in 1978, has helped launch Philadelphia Green and its many projects.

Call to Action

One regional newspaper recently printed this compelling line in one of its articles: "Until recently, progress was defined by growth—now it is defined in terms of 'quality-of-life' issues." This quote can also be applied to our inner cities. When all is said and done, an increase in vacant land does not have to mean the decline of a city. It means we have to rethink how 50 years of economic and demographic change have affected our neighborhoods, both physically and psychologically; then we need to take action to transform vacant land into a neighborhood asset.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is poised to take the next step. Using the findings of a two-year project funded by The William Penn Foundation, the Society has produced a city-wide vacant land management plan entitled: *An Asset Management Plan for Vacant Land in Philadelphia Neighborhoods*. Through this report, the Society is proposing that a new systems approach to managing vacant land be put in place, and looks to the newly elected Street administration to take up the baton of one of the greatest challenges facing Philadelphia in the new millennium.

Lenora Jackson-Evans of Strawberry Mansion neighborhood, enthuses, "I love the area, and the people here are very nice. Everyone on my block is like family. I wouldn't trade it for nothing. It's seen its bad days, but slowly, with the help of the city, community gardeners, and residents we're seeing more and more good days."

Our neighborhoods are our lifeblood. This is where families set down roots, friends meet, and children play. But as tatters of this social fabric begin to show, the legacy of vacant land can no longer be ignored. ♦

Pamela Vu is associate editor of *Green Scene* magazine. She also edits our newsletters, *PHS News* and *Philadelphia Green News*. PHS' vacant land management reports are available by contacting John Gannon at (215) 988-8809.



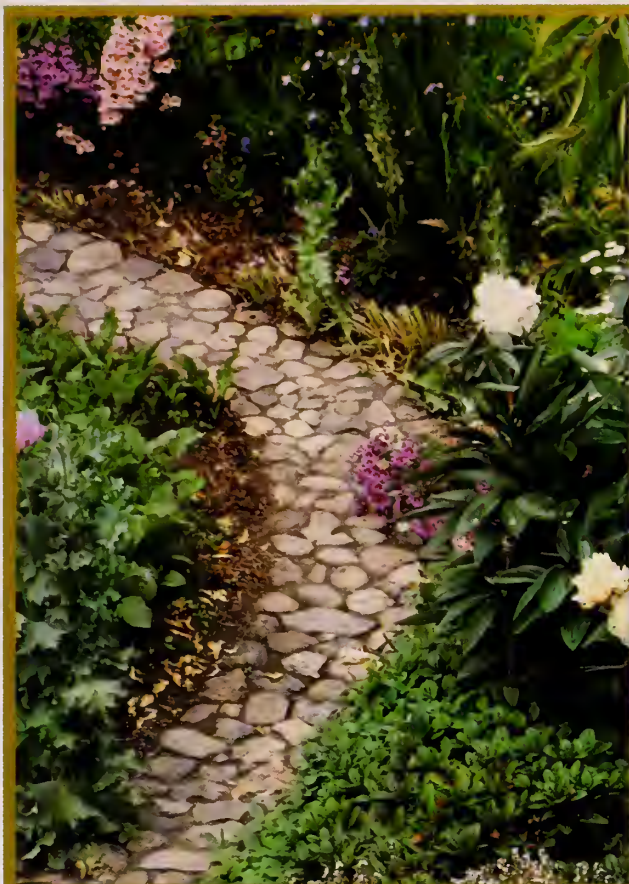
New Kensington: A Working Model in Progress

For the past five years, the New Kensington program has been a microcosm of what a city-wide vacant land plan can do for Philadelphia. Begun in 1995 by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and OHCD, New Kensington has shown that a neighborhood approach and a little green ingenuity can make a big difference when it comes to managing and maintaining vacant land.

The program's accomplishments include the following: planting street trees; turning vacant lots into community gardens and sitting parks; developing a system to maintain large lots; cleaning and greening approximately 300 smaller lots; transferring ownership of over 100 vacant lots to residents through a side yard program; and organizing an open space committee.

In addition, a Community Garden Center was built as a local source for garden materials such as plants, soil, compost, and woodchips, as well as a location for plant sales, workshops, and neighborhood meetings.

To put it in perspective, of the 1100 unmanaged vacant lots identified at the outset, approximately 540 or 49% have been "treated" as a result of the program. It is this success—highlighted by its partnerships with local businesses, city agencies, community groups, and the New Kensington Community Development Corporation—that has sparked the interest of city officials to examine seriously a city-wide strategy to the vacant land problem. For now, all eyes are on New Kensington.



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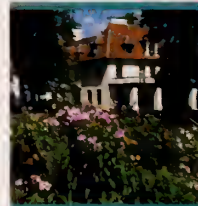
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Clematis heracleifolia

8 Out-of-the-Ordinary Plants You Should Know

Story by Pamela D. Jacobsen

Hortus Third, that massive horticultural reference book, lists 20,397 species of plants used in North America over the past 20 years. This extraordinary figure represents 281 plant families. But, as most are aware, you'll only come across a handful of these at a local garden center, or when browsing the pages of a plant catalog. More likely, you find bee balm, gayfeather, gas plant, coreopsis 'Moonbeam', hosta and, heavens, we should ever forget sedum 'Autumn Joy'! They may be attractive landscape staples, but they're hardly exciting anymore. So, I ask you this: Just how many new varieties of yarrow and iris must be purchased before a gardener cries out in desperation, "Give me something unusual, something beautiful, and something I can show to my gardening friends to turn them green—with envy, that is!" Gardeners your pleas have been heard. Here are 8 plants whose unique qualities deserve a special spot in your landscape.

UNCOMMON Beauties

***Clematis heracleifolia* var. *dauidiana* 'Blue Mood' (6)**

Every once in a while, a familiar species produces an exciting variation. That's just what happened at White Flower Farm. The result is a vigorous, 3-foot, non-climbing herbaceous clematis. Unlike its vining cousin, it produces trumpet-shaped flowers of a deep, intense blue, which are also surprisingly fragrant. And while most clematis have somewhat pale-green leaves, those of 'Blue Mood' are dark and highlighted against rich burgundy-colored stems. Hardy in Zones 4-7, its blooming period is August through September.

White Flower Farms notes, "'Blue Mood' looks superb on its own, leaning against a fence, or sprucing up a foundation planting. Grown in full sun or partial

shade, it complements border plants such as *Angelica gigas* or *Eupatorium* 'Gateway'."

***Heliopsis* 'Lorraine Sunshine' (1,4)** (False sunflower, Sunflower *heliopsis*)

Heliopsis are the North American prairie version of sunflowers. Here's a perennial version with a highly distinctive twist—it has incredible variegated leaves. Jody Petersen of Mostardi Nursery and Greenhouses refers to the leaves as "very strange—the veins are green and the leaf is white, like a tapestry or wax resist." And, she notes, "it is an excellent cut flower."

Developed by Brent Hanson of Rhinelander Floral Company in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, this *heliopsis* was named in memory of one of his

faithful employees known to be a cheerful gardener with a sunny disposition.

Growing to 30-inches tall and 16-inches wide, 'Lorraine Sunshine' has luminous yellow, daisy-like blooms, which Petersen says "can go on for months!" Best of all, it is hardy in Zones 3-9, and does well in average soil with full sun and only moderate watering.

***Kirengeshoma palmata* (6)** (Yellow waxbells)

Shade gardeners rejoice! Here's a herbaceous landscape plant that adds a dramatic touch where you need it most. Yellow waxbell is a shrub-like shade lover reaching 3- or 4-feet tall and equally wide. This perennial produces masses of 8-inch long, soft green, maple-shaped

leaves accented by dramatic black stems. As if the foliage isn't enough, in mid to late summer, 1-1/2 inch long, creamy yellow, bell-shaped flowers appear, hanging downward in clusters. After several weeks of flowering, curious-looking seed capsules appear, all of which are pointed and brownish-green in color.

A Japanese and Korean native, it's hardy in Zones 5-10. Situate it in highly organic, well-drained (yet moist) soil that is somewhat acidic. Once established, *Kirengeshoma* doesn't appreciate being moved. Luckily, it can be propagated every three to five years by dividing large root clumps.

Yellow waxbells make an excellent accent plant for the back border, or group it in a shaded corner or pathway nestled among ferns and hosta. Tall, shade-tolerant plants like *Rodgersia*, *Aconitum* (monkshood), *Digitalis* (foxglove), and *Actaea alba* and *A. rubra* (baneberry) also complement it nicely.

***Euphorbia corollata* (5)**

(Wild hippo)

"Oh no, not another spurge!," you moan. Well, this one is different, explains Margarit Babbe of J. Franklin Styer Nursery. "*Euphorbia corollata* does all one might dream of; it blooms from early summer through fall, is resistant to heat and drought, and [is] an excellent cut flower with its showy masses of white flowers on 1-3 foot sturdy stems." What more could one ask for?

Well, it's also hardy in Zones 3 to 9, and creates an excellent mass planting in the sunny border. Babbe suggests gardeners interplant this euphorbia with low growers like *Leucanthemum* 'Little Princess' to create an "exquisite lacy veil." For interesting contrast, you may also want to try interspersing portulaca and seaside wormwood—both of which can tolerate dry conditions and still produce an abundant groundcover effect.

***Clerodendrum bungei* (3)**

(Glory flower)

This is an exotic looking native from China that is rarely used in the North. According to Logee's Greenhouses, Ltd., glory flower is a non-stop bloomer—as long as temperatures remain above 35°F. When grown in full sun, it produces clusters of fragrant, rose-pink flowers borne on stiff, upright stems surrounded by deep green leaves with well-defined veins. Reaching a height of 6 feet, the plant somewhat resembles a pink-bloom-



Heliopsis 'Lorraine Sunshine'

ing hydrangea when viewed at a distance.

Marginally hardy in Zone 6, the *Clerodendrum bungei* species needs a well-protected, warm spot, away from damaging winds. If overwintered outdoors, it will die back to the root crown. But in colder locations, the plant should be taken indoors prior to frost. Inside on a sunny window, it will reward the conscientious gardener by remaining in bloom almost year round. As a garden plant (in Zones 7 and above), it can be kept compact by cutting back in spring. Outdoors it produces suckers which may become invasive if not properly contained.

***Eryngium agavifolium* 'Sapphire Blue' (1)**

(Sea holly)

Sea hollies have been around for a long time, taking root in carefree perennial borders and cottage gardens. Their intense, almost electric or fluorescent

coloration makes them a standout in any sunny location. This year, Blooms of Bressingham, introduces a new variety, 'Sapphire Blue'; a hybrid from Europe, hardy in Zones 5-9. The cultivar has an especially brilliant lavender-blue color and is matched by larger-than-average blooms. Looking a bit like a highly polished agave, this sea holly produces a sturdy rosette base up to 18-inches wide. From the center, 30-inch tall iridescent flower spikes appear in mid summer.

As perennials, eryngiums are often incorporated in seashore settings, since they tolerate extreme conditions, such as infertile soil and intense heat. Inland, they adapt like true pioneers when grown in full sun and well-drained soil. Should they like their location, you will find them to be generous self-sowers.

***Dianthus carthusianorum* (6)**

(Carthusian pink)

This is not the *Dianthus* you find in those cute little 4-packs at the nursery,



Clerodendrum bungei



Dianthus carthusianorum



Eryngium agavifolium 'Sapphire Blue'



Euphorbia corollata



Kirengeshoma palmata



Strobilanthes dyerianus

even though it has been cultivated in Europe since the 16th century. The North American Dianthus Society's newsletter, *The Gilliflower Times*, refers to it as Carthusian pink, believed to have been brought to British gardens in the Middle Ages by Carthusian monks. According to White Flower Farm, *D. carthusianorum* has been "almost impossible to find in commerce (at least, in this country)." Luckily, White Flower Farm and a few seed exchanges are bringing the plant back into circulation.

Nestled amidst pale green, almost glass-like foliage are 16- to 24-inch tall, wiry stems on which clusters of 20 or more buds arise. Expect a non-ending supply of deep pink to magenta-purple flowers from June through July—as long as the plant is grown in full sun. Commonly found in dry meadows and hilly locations throughout Europe, this species is hardy in Zones 5-7 and adapts easily to less fertile, well-drained garden soil.

Rand B. Lee, President and Founder of the North American Dianthus Society describes Carthusian pinks as having "an airy, understated charm that belies their toughness, hardiness, and eagerness to spread on well-drained, sunny sites. A colony of them, all raising their rose cluster-heads in unison, is particularly winsome when interplanted with blue flax (*Linum perenne*) and creeping baby's breath (*Gypsophila repens*), both of which enjoy the same growing conditions."

Be sure to include this ethereal-looking species in a front border. It will stump gardeners having preconceived notions of what a *Dianthus* should look like.

***Stroilanthes dyerianus* (2,3,5)** (Persian shield)

Here's an annual near and dear to *Green Scene's* heart. That's because, in summer, it is planted in a container right outside the door of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's headquarters on 20th & Arch in Philadelphia. Raised for its dramatic foliage, Persian shield has 8-inch long, toothed leaves, with intense purple undersides and iridescent coloration above. Leaf color remains true all summer.

Undaunted by heat and tolerant of dry conditions, *Stroilanthes dyerianus*

needs full sun and good drainage to reach its maximum height of 5 feet. To keep it in bounds at 3 feet tall, regular pinching back is necessary. Gardeners who battle deer and rabbit will find that this plant is often passed over by hungry critters, allowing it to be used in areas where wildlife are prevalent.

This annual looks especially lovely intermixed with silver-toned plants like Dusty Miller, silver *Plectranthus*, lamb's ear, and many types of artemesia. It can also be used effectively in large planters, although first frost will produce heavy damage to the foliage. ❖

Pamela D. Jacobsen wrote "A First Millennium Garden" in the January 2000 issue.

Sources

This listing shows sources for the plants mentioned in the article. However, each nursery may also carry other plants listed in this story. To make sure, ask which ones they stock.

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BREAKING THE LAWN

"Winterize Your Lawn," the big sign outside the garden store commanded. I've fed it, watered it, mowed it, raked it and watched a lot of it die anyway. Now I'm supposed to winterize it? I hope it's too late. Grass lawns have to be the stupidest thing we've come up with outside of thong swimsuits. We constantly battle dandelions, Queen Anne's lace, thistle, violets, chicory, and clover that thrive naturally, so we can grow grass that must be nursed through an annual four-step chemical dependency.

Imagine the conversation The Almighty might have with St. Francis about this:

The Almighty: Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started cons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracted butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

St. Francis: They belong to a tribe that has settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great extent to kill them and replace them with grass.

Almighty: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies,

birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

Francis: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

Almighty: Do they then cut it and bale it like hay?

Francis: Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

Almighty: They bag it? *Why*—is it a cash crop that they sell?

Francis: No, Sir. Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

Almighty: Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

Francis: Yes, Sir.

Almighty: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

Francis: You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing as fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

Almighty: What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The

trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

Francis: You'd better sit down, Lord. As soon as the leaves fall, the Surbanites rake them into great piles and have them hauled away.

Almighty: No! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter, and keep the soil moist and loose?

Francis: After throwing away their leaves, they go out and buy something they call "mulch." They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

Almighty: And where do they get this mulch?

Francis: They cut down trees and grind them up.

Almighty: Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

Catherine: *Dumb and Dumber*, Lord. It's a real stupid movie about....

Almighty: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story. ♦

This anonymous story was found on the Internet and forwarded to us by an avid *Green Scene* reader. If you know the author, please have him or her contact us at greenscene@pennhort.org.

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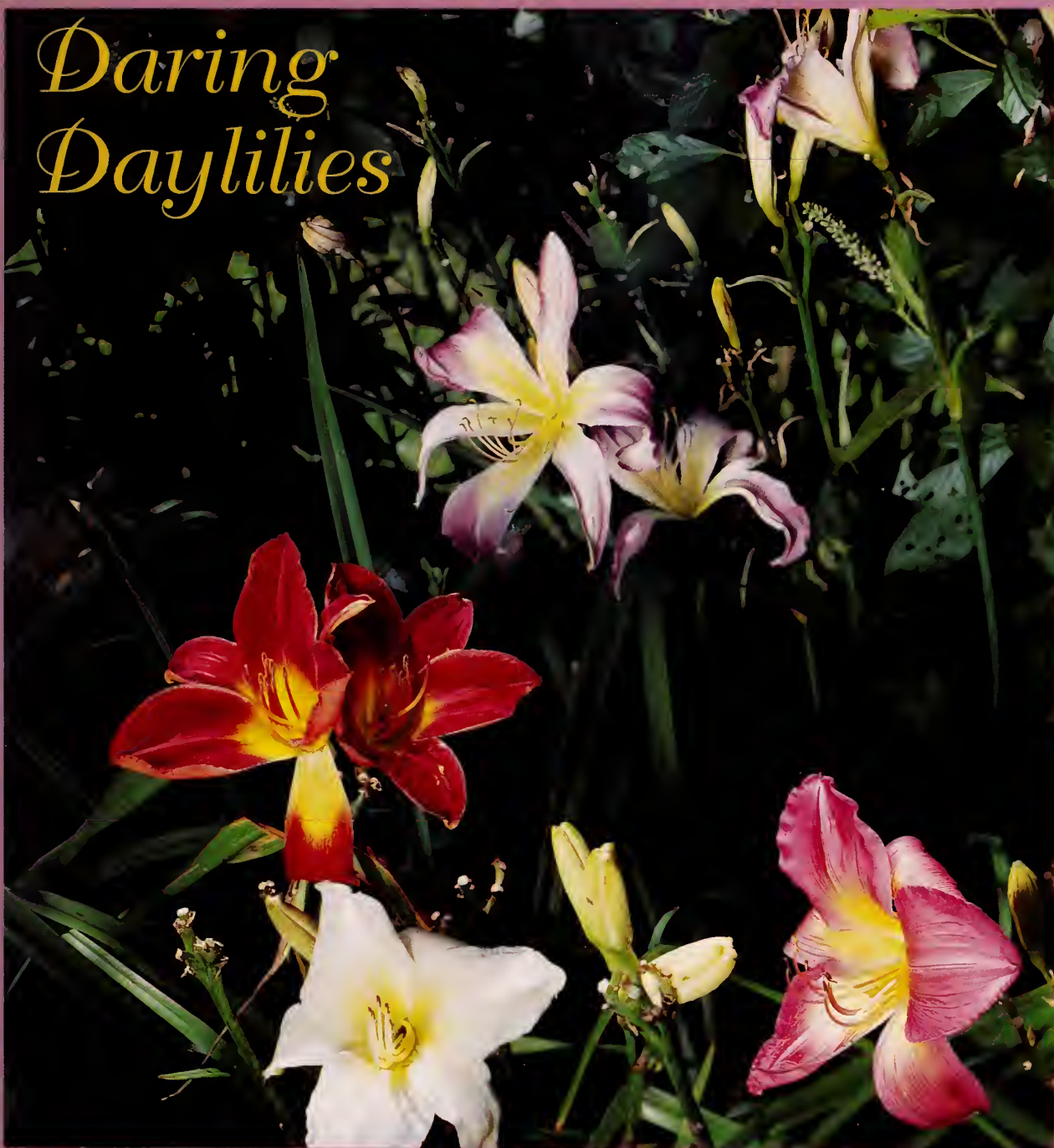


GREEN scene

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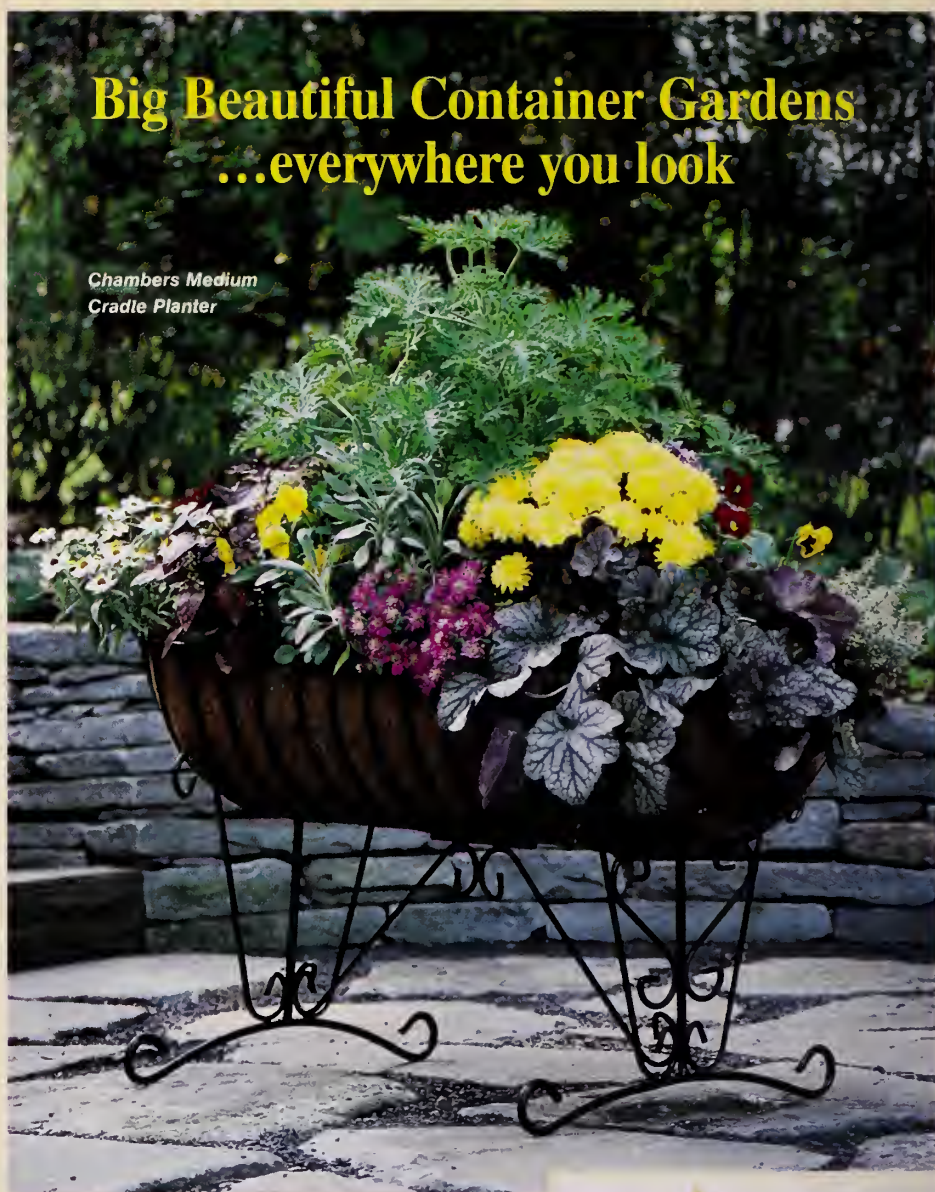


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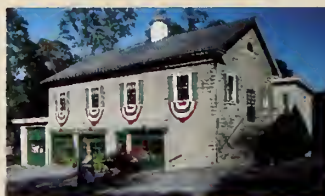
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Photo: Residential patio container, Summer 1998. Container emphasizing tropical foliage

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Announcing A New Greenhouse and Horticultural Program

Cathedral Village President, Bill Owens, recently announced the development of an extensive Horticultural Program. The focal point will be a large greenhouse and headhouse, currently under construction.

Horticulturist, Margaret (Peggy) Schofield is the newly appointed Director of the Program. While planning and developing classes and activities to appeal to all resident gardeners, she was assisted by the late Mrs. E. Perot Walker. As Director, Peggy will also be responsible for the gardens and landscape design of the entire Cathedral Village Campus.

This new Program will add another unique dimension to our community which is nationally recognized as an innovative and progressive leader in retirement living.

Whether you are an experienced horticulturist or a novice gardener, call our residential Admissions Office to learn more about the new Program and the many other cultural advantages that Cathedral Village has to offer.

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Contents

6 The Potting Shed

10 Annual Vines

Nancy J. Ondra takes us on a journey up the garden wall with a story on easy-to-grow climbing annuals. Beyond the morning glories we all love and admire, there are other winning annuals that are just as reliable and arguably even more colorful. So whether you have a trellis, a pergola, or just a fence that needs some perking up, these plants are sure to find a spot in your summer garden.

Pete Prown



16 Days of Daylilies

Daylilies are one of the finest plants for our region, being both attractive and resilient. Join Dorothy Noble as she tells of a special daylily garden in rural Pennsylvania, where countless new *Heemerocallis* cultivars grow

abundantly. From pastel colors to ruffled petals to everything in between, the daylily world is literally exploding and, if you haven't already, it's time to join the party.

22 Understanding Invasives

Many of the trees, shrubs, and vines that grow rampantly in our green areas are not natives; in fact, some are insidious creatures known as "invasives." These plants were inadvertently brought to our region, only to escape into the wild and push out native species through unchecked growth. Here, Adam Levine looks at this pervasive problem, and further points out several of the common plants we buy and grow that are actually invasives.

26 Easy Roses

Easy roses...in the Mid-Atlantic region? There's no such thing, you say! According to Patricia A. Taylor, however, there are a growing number of rose cultivars that can take our heat, humidity, and sometimes brutal winters. Here are five of the toughest, yet most beautiful.

32 A Drive-By Garden

The flower bed by Walt Chandoha's driveway had literally languished for years. Now, inspired by the memory of his late wife, the author/photographer tackles the task of turning it into a vibrant new garden. Let's observe his progress, step by step.

37 Letters

38 Classified Ads

40 Backyard

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society motivates people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

Cover Photo: Daylilies by Bob Ferguson

GREENscene

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Letter From the Editor

years, if not decades, for their gardens to mature and for those small shrubs to become stately walls of green. Today, however, I'm deeply envious. As your average obsessive gardener, I frequently walk around my small yard, imagining tiny rooms, walls, hedges, ponds, and everything else under the sun. But the Strongs had a big field to play with and, I'm sure, they were having the time of their lives, especially over the fact that it would take decades for their garden to mature. My "hurry-up" teenaged mentality simply couldn't fathom the joys of something that takes a good, long time. And as we were leaving the Laskett, I remember my mother noting that this would be an important garden someday; 20 years

later, her comments proved true. Today, it is considered the largest, private formal garden created in Britain since 1945.

Last fall, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Scott Arboretum invited Sir Roy to our region to give a lecture on the Laskett. The sight of the now-mature garden was staggering: those stumpy shrubs now formed great walls of greenery and, within each of the distinct rooms, flowers shamelessly spilled out of their deep, loamy beds. If nothing else, I can say I visited a renowned garden in its very infancy, but more than

that bit of tourist trivia, the experience did make me a better gardener. It gave me the courage to plant a hedge of upright yew to divide my garden from the rest of the open yard. This may not seem like much, but it takes nerve to dig ten holes across your lawn

and declare silently to oneself, "Here, a hedge wall will someday stand." It has also given me the confidence to plan other, more elaborate schemes: a second ornamental garden, a new terraced lawn in the front and, naturally, more hedge walls. Anything's possible.

Looking back at that vacation stop today, I now see the Strongs' garden as a pivotal point in my evolution as a gardener. But if there's a real moral to this tale, it's to teach us all to bring our children and grandchildren to great gardens, just as my parents did with their brood. I am forever dragging my kids to gardens in our area. Whether the garden is grand or, as the Laskett was 20 years ago, just getting off the ground, I think it's important for parents to send their children a clear message that gardens are an important facet of our health, happiness, and recreation. Your kids might not understand this at first, but somewhere down the road, it just might turn on a few lightbulbs.

Pete Prown
greenscene@pennhort.org

Have you ever visited a place that completely altered the way you think about gardens...even though you may not have realized it at the time? I had such an experience at 17 when I had the chance to visit the Laskett, the garden of Sir Roy Strong (former director of London's Victoria & Albert Museum and author of many acclaimed garden books) and his wife Julia Trevelyan Oman, a noted designer. Of course, I was mostly oblivious to this—I was a teenager more into guitars and rock 'n' roll than delphiniums or yew

Teach the Children

hedges, and Mr. Strong was simply a friend of the family's. But I thought his garden was intriguing nevertheless.

We stopped there during a UK vacation in 1979. My memories of the trip in general are somewhat hazy, but I have a crystal-clear picture of the garden...largely because it was only about 2-feet tall. Spread out across an adjoining field, seemingly in the middle of English nowhere, I could look in several directions and see dwarfish lines of hedges forming an intricate maze of garden rooms. I think I initially chuckled to myself, but it was soon explained that the garden was only a few years old and still very much in its formative stages. The shrubs that were then wee sprouts would someday form tall hedges and the spartan beds would be filled with interesting plants and topiary. The more I took in the view, the more fascinating it became. I began to see the mind of design across these partitioned green zones—there was clear, definite *thought* in everything I saw protruding from the ground. "Yes," I realized, the 30-watt lightbulb flickering on in my brain, "Great gardens are planned."

I also recall feeling sad that the Strongs would have to wait



Old Seed, Young Sprout

One rainy morning last spring, employees of the Burpee Seed Company began to retake a part of their heritage. The company had recently reacquired Fordhook Farm in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, a place which had originally been the testing gardens for many of Burpee's early plant introductions. For the staff, however, it was a reawakening of another kind: while cleaning out the newly purchased property, a single squash seed was discovered on the floor of the Farm's old seedhouse.

In the early 1900s, this was a state-of-the-art seed storage facility, where wagons would unload seed to be stored. Eventually, the house fell into disrepair and was neglected. Still, from the millions of seeds that passed through its doors, one lonely squash seed somehow dropped to the ground and survived untrampled.

No one knows how long this single seed was being kicked around, but according to Sharon Kaszan, Trials and Farm manager for Burpee, the last time this seedhouse was used was more than 15 years ago. Enjoying a good challenge, a few employees of Burpee decided to plant the seed to see what would come up.

Three months later—with very little supervised care and remarkably free of groundhog damage—a single 30-foot vine with five 10-pound fruits sat happily in the trial grounds. The variety has yet to be established, but it appears to be a Hubbard squash, some of which are still available through Burpee today.

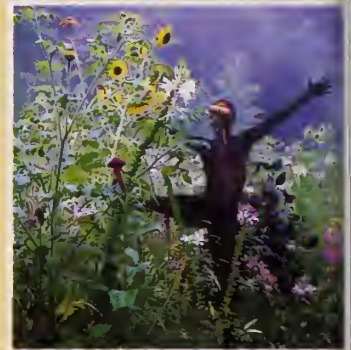
So how long can a seed survive? Many years is what Burpee's experts say, depending upon the seed variety. So what's the lesson here? Perhaps it's that we shouldn't throw away those leftover packs of seeds from last year. Maybe they'll be too dried out to germinate or, as this old squash seed proved...*maybe not.*

—Colby Wolfe



AN ANCIENT TREE. We may have all marveled at the arrival of the new millennium, but for a tree in England, it was a mere blip on the calendar. According to a recent CNN story, the **Great Yew** at Crowhurst—a town south of London—is around 4,000 years old.

With 4,000 summers and winters under its belt, the yew is alive and healthy, though part of it is actually dead. The core has been empty for several centuries, but its outer layers remain vibrant. As the report noted, "According to foresters, the tree's hollow center is a survival strategy, providing resilience against the tens of thousands of gales and ice storms a tree has to cope with in the long haul." Make that a *very* long haul.



A TOUR DE FORCE. In search of a fascinating tour for your garden club or community group? Try **Meadowbloom**, Sam Kenworthy's highly artistic garden in Northern Chester County. Featuring acres of eclectic plantings, outdoor sculpture, and strutting peacocks, this garden is surely one of the Delaware Valley's finest. For information on visiting Meadowbloom by group, call (610) 495-5187. [You can also read an article on the garden in the May 1994 issue.]

SUNBURN. It may seem cool and spring-like outdoors, but there is actually enough solar heat to dry out and kill your young seedlings in a day. If you've grown flowers or vegetables from seed, harden them off by leaving them outdoors in a shady spot for a few hours a day

continued



Got Milkweed?

Asclepias verticillata, the thread-leaf or Eastern-whorled milkweed. This unusual milkweed's diminutive, creamy-white flowers appear on 2-foot-tall stems. But unlike other milkweeds, *A. verticillata* exudes the delicious scent of jasmine.

According to Babbe, friends coming to your garden may easily mistake this plant for *Amsonia* at first glance. Many gardeners are unaware that *A. verticillata* grows wild throughout the eastern part of the country, and that it is also found in southern Canada, the Great

Plains, and down into Florida and Arizona. Like its relatives, it exudes a characteristic milky latex from leaves and stems.

Soils ranging from sandy to rocky to clay are suitable for this species. A shallow-rooted perennial, it needs full sun and tolerates dry conditions. Hardy in Zones 4 and up, this milkweed looks right at home in an informal cottage garden or wildflower setting. Best of all, it also attracts the monarch butterfly.

—Pamela D. Jacobsen

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“Put in your garden bench first, because you’ll want to sit amidst the splendor of this finely foliaged plant and relax in its aromatherapeutic fragrance,” is sage advice given by Margarit Babbe of J. Franklin Styer about

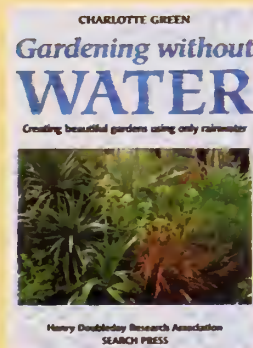
Do this for about a week before setting them in the ground.

Finally, try to plant them on a cloudy day, preferably before it rains. If you must plant your seedlings on a bright, sunny day, cover them for a day or two with an inverted pot or cardboard box to avoid **transplant shock**. There’s nothing worse than planting an entire bed, only to find your new plants wilted to the ground the next morning.

BLUES FOR BIOTECH. In the war against biotechnology and genetically engineered food, one hard-fought battle over the so-called **Terminator Technology** has given its opponents their first victory [see the related article in the Sept. 1999 issue]. This past October, Monsanto announced that it would halt the development of plants that are genetically engineered to produce infertile seeds.

While other companies are still free to license this technology, the biotech industry is at least beginning to recognize the public opposition to their products. As consumer and advocacy groups gain momentum in tackling other biotech-related issues (such as the labeling of genetically modified foods), only one thing is for sure—this is only the beginning of the ongoing biotech battle.

ROUTING DROUGHT. After last year, we all want to avoid another year of dry, dying plants. To help us out is **Gardening Without Water** by Charlotte Green (Search Press, softcover, \$14.95), a new book filled with plant tips and water-saving techniques that can help us through the dry weeks of summer. Through mulching, irrigation, and the art of capturing rainwater, this book is full of good ideas, as well as dozens of useful color photographs and illustrations. There’s also a lovely section of drought-resistant plants for you to peruse. An attractive, winning book.



Gardening by Numbers

Did you know that roughly 64% of all Americans partake in some form of gardening? Let’s look at the percentages for other horticultural activities, each one revealing how many of our fellow citizens revel in this very healthy pastime:

Lawn care	47%
Flower gardening.....	37%
Houseplants	31%
Vegetable gardening	26%
Tree care	20%
Container gardening	10%
Water gardening.....	4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1996)

The Gardener's Bookshelf



The Afterlife of Flowers

By Jane Feldman Gross (Running Press, 96pp, hardcover, \$24.95)

Level: All levels

Pros: A visual virtuoso that will change the way you look at flowers.

Cons: May not interest those wanting information on how to press plants.

Jane Feldman Gross's *The Afterlife of Flowers* may make you feel like a child again. Each time you turn the page, another vivid daydream unfolds. Stunningly photographed and beautifully laid out, there's no denying this book's appeal to the aesthetes. Each specimen is captured in full bloom and frozen in time for us to relish.

By the way, did I happen to mention that these are "dead" flowers? Indeed, each flower has been pressed and positioned evocatively to convey a mood and

inspire delight. At times, I found myself interpreting each flower as if it were a Rorschach inkblot, taking pleasure in my musings. Gross's revelations and insights peppered throughout add a personal touch and a bit of philosophy about nature.

You'll be amazed that most of these flowers are no more than 2-inches wide, though they take on a larger-than-life persona when magnified and seen in full grandeur. However, if you're looking for a technical or historical discussion on pressing plants, you won't find it here, although there is a section at the end of the book that identifies each specimen and provides its true dimensions. This book is purely for the aesthete who's not so much interested in the how-tos as to the artistic beauty. For Gross, beauty is not only in the eye of the beholder, but also in the "singularity of each blossom."

—Pamela Vu

Gardenwalks

By Marina Harrison & Lucy Rosenfeld (Michael Kesend Pub., 356pp, softcover, \$19.95)

Level: All levels

Pros: A detailed guide to East Coast gardens you can visit.

Cons: None

This book is "a must" for folks who love to visit gardens. Subtitled "101 of the Best Gardens from Maine to Virginia and Recommended Gardens Throughout the Country," this guide contains state-by-state listings of gardens to visit on your holiday or free weekends.

In eastern Pennsylvania, there are write-ups of obvious spots such as Longwood and Bartram's Garden, but also gems like Chanticleer in Wayne and Joanna Reed's much-admired Longview Farm in Malvern. There are also more gardens in the New Jersey and Delaware chapters for you to peruse.

Whether you want to visit these local gardeners or stop off somewhere in Vermont or Virginia on your summer vacation, this handy softcover will prove an indispensable travel guide to stick in your glove compartment. You'll never know when you'll have a few hours to spare and this book can help you spend that time in sheer horticultural bliss. [Available by calling (800) 488-8040]

—Pete Prown



ASK A GARDENER



by Hotline Volunteers

Last summer, we spent two weeks in your beautiful state and saw a wonderful pink-flowering shrub that is the State flower. What is it?

Gracya Leroux, Québec, Canada

By an Act of the General Assembly approved on May 5, 1933, Pennsylvania adopted the mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) as the official State flower. During the middle of June, the laurel is in full bloom, adding a tinge of pink to every sunny nook of Pennsylvania's mountains. By the way, our State tree is the hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*).

I have a five-year-old redbud tree. Over the past few months, the bark has started to crumble. It has not yet fallen off the tree, but we have also noticed a green coating appearing on the limbs. What is causing this?

Tom Doyle, Pottstown, PA

Canker is the most destructive fungal disease of redbud (*Cercis*), and it can cause many stems to die. Remove the severely infected branches and, on trunks and large branches, remove any cankers by cutting about 2-inches beyond the infected area. Sterilize all pruning tools after each cut with rubbing alcohol. You should check with your County Extension Agent for further recommendations (look in the phone book).

How do you keep petunias from getting leggy?

D. Freedman, Holland, PA

It helps to deadhead petunias on a regular basis, about twice a week. Pinch it off just below the blossom on the stem. Halfway through the summer, you might want to give the entire plant a "haircut" by cutting all the stems in half. They rebound quickly and will reward you with flowers well into fall.

Do you have a question for our garden experts? If so, contact PHS's Horticultural Hotline in the McLean Library, which is open Monday-Friday, 9:30-noon. Phone (215) 988-8777; fax (215) 988-8783; email: askagardener@pennhort.org.

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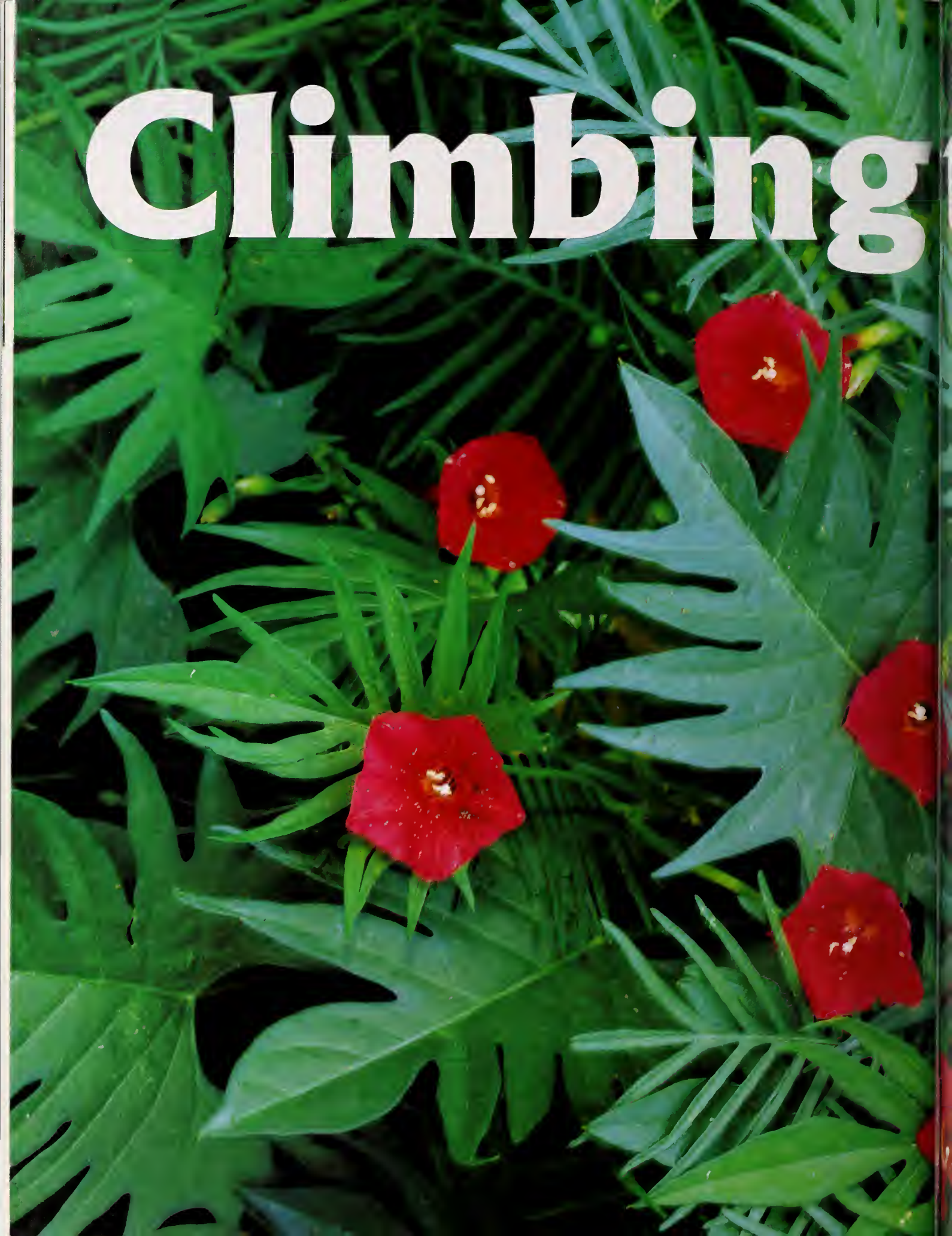
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Climbing



the Walls

Out-of-the-Ordinary Annual Vines

Story by Nancy J. Ondra

If you're looking to get more flower power from a limited space, it's hard to beat annual vines. Give them just a bit of room in a bed or border, and they'll reward you with months of color to dress up walls, fences, trellises, and other vertical surfaces. Best of all, they bloom right at eye level, so you can admire them up close.

Over the past few years, seed companies have responded to the increasing popularity of annual vines by providing a wealth of exciting new offerings. Some are old favorites dressed up in new colors; others are lesser-known but certainly garden-worthy species being rediscovered by adventurous gardeners. Here are a few great vines to set your sights on.

Climbing the Walls

No discussion on annual vines would be complete without a mention of **morning glories** (*Ipomoea* sp.). The large, beautiful blooms of 'Heavenly Blue' have graced many a garden over the years and with good reason: few other flowers offer that distinctive sky-blue hue. If you're looking for something a little more exciting, though, check out some of the newer *I. imperialis* cultivars, such as 'Mt. Fuji Mix' and 'Tie Dye'. Definitely not for the color-cautious, these outrageous selections bloom in a range of intense blues, purples, fuchsias, and reds, as well as some softer pink and lavender shades. The blooms of 'Mt. Fuji Mix' have a distinct white edge that flows in toward the center at regular intervals. 'Tie Dye', on the other hand, looks exactly like it sounds: a wild pattern of irregular white striping against a colored background. These two are worth growing just for the amazing flowers, but they offer an added bonus: green leaves shaped like a shield and decorated with irregular white, silver, and gray splotches.

Looking for something to give vertical accent to your hot-color border? **Cardinal climber** (*Ipomoea x multifida*) certainly qualifies, with small but bright red blooms that contrast handsomely against deeply lobed, bright green foliage. A few years ago, I received *Ipomoea coccinea*—another eye-catching species—from a seed exchange. I've enjoyed its orange-red flowers and heart-shaped leaves every year since then—although not always by choice. This one is a very vigorous twining climber and re-seeds prolifically, so even if you pull out the seedlings you find, you'll probably always have a few left.

Small-scale plantings may not be able to support a vigorous vine, but there are a number of lovely climbers that can produce a delightful display without much support. One of my favorites is *Asarina scandens*, commonly known as **climbing snapdragon** or (for some less obvious reason) chickabiddy. The 1-inch blooms do resemble individual snapdragon flowers. You'll often find it sold as a mix of purple, pink, and white, though individual colors are now available as well. All make excellent covers for a small, special trellis, and they are great in planters, too.

Love-in-a-puff (*Cardiospermum halicababum*) belongs in every garden for the young and the young-at-heart. True, it's not especially showy, with lacy green leaves and tiny white blooms, but what you'll grow it for are the inflated seed-pods that resemble small green balloons bobbing in the lightest breeze. It's hard to resist popping a few of the pods in your fingers, but that's okay—there will be plenty more! If you let some ripen on the vine, you'll find black seeds inside: each bears a white heart, which gives the plant its common name, love-in-a-puff. This vine climbs by tendrils, so you'll need to give it netting to climb, or let it find its way up through a shrub or other vine.

Another worthy climber is the morning glory relative, *Ipomoea lobata* (syn. *Mina lobata*). Commonly known as **Spanish flag** or **exotic love**, this climber could pass for a morning glory early in the summer, with its three-lobed leaves and twining stems. When it blooms, though, the difference is clear: Spanish flag produces one-sided racemes of tubular blooms, which start out scarlet and gradually age to orange and then creamy



yellow. A newer selection called 'Citronella' is pictured in seed catalogs as being mainly yellow and cream, but I find that the new buds still have a touch of coral to them. In my garden, 'Citronella' starts to bloom about a month later, toward the middle or end of August.

The **black-eyed Susan vine** (*Thunbergia alata*) has always caught my eye in catalogs, but the seeds commonly sold seem to be an unfortunate mix of the yellow-orange and the white-flowered forms. Fortunately, Thompson and Morgan now offers *T. alata* 'Beauty Spots,' which is actually three separate packets labeled by color. *T. alata* 'Aurea' produces the yellow-orange color, while 'Albo-maculata' (also known as 'Alba')



Clockwise from left: Love-in-a-puff;
'Tie Dye' morning glory;
Spanish flag; 'Mt. Fuji' morning glory.
Previous spread: Cardinal Climber



Climbing the Walls

Top right: Black-eyed Susan vine.
Bottom: Climbing Snapdragon

yields white blooms: both have a deep purple-black center spot.

These two look great combined with the black berries of Malabar spinach (*Basella alba*) or purple peppers (such as 'Black Prince'). To me, the real prize is the third packet: *T. alata* 'Lutea', which offers light yellow flowers without the contrasting eye. All three colors of this twining vine are vigorous enough for a border or a regular trellis, but they also make unique and attractive hanging basket specimens. 🌱



Nancy Ondra owns Pendragon Perennials in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, and is in turn owned by a Shetland sheepdog and one house bunny. Info: Pendragon Perennials, 225 Green Street, Emmaus, PA 18049, (610) 965-0102, pendragon@fast.net.

SOURCES

- **Thompson & Morgan**

P.O. Box 1308
Jackson, NJ 08527
(800) 274-7333
www.thompson-morgan.com

Asarina scandens; *Ipomoea lobata* and *I. lobata* 'Citronella'; *Thunbergia alata* 'Beauty Spots'

- **Park Seed Co.**

1 Parkton Ave.
Greenwood, SC 29647
(800) 845-3369
www.parkseed.com

Asarina scandens; *Cardiospermum halicacabum*; *Ipomoea imperialis* 'Mt. Fuji Mix' and 'Tie Dye'; *I. x multifida*; *Ipomoea lobata* and *I. lobata* 'Citronella'; *Thunbergia alata*

- **Shepherd's Garden Seeds**

30 Irene St.
Torrington, CT 06790
(860) 482-3648
www.shepherdseeds.com

Asarina scandens; *Ipomoea x multifida*; *I. lobata*; *Thunbergia alata* 'Alba'

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Daylilies of all different shapes and colors
explode in the Swain's mid-summer garden.

Dreaming of Daylilies

A New Look at an Old Favorite


Story By Dorothy Noble Photography by Bob Ferguson

Douglas and Ann Swain have a true garden for all seasons. In spring, azaleas brighten the emerald patchwork of assorted hostas. Dozens of lilac cultivars perfume the lush, winding pathways, while daffodils bring their sunny touch to balmy days. In fall, the gentle plumes of grasses accent the bril-

liancy of autumn's gold, red, and orange. Vivid viburnums, still vigorous after their spring flower show, paint burgundy foliage and red berries. Ornamental evergreens accent the specimen shrubs anytime of the year. In winter, their fascinating shapes and diverse shades of green extend a regal beauty. Frost or light snow bestows a glistening stillness. But, come

high summer, the Swain's garden explodes with 500 varieties of daylilies. Talk about *a show*.

First-time visitors to their garden marvel at the hitherto unknown array of colors and shapes to be found in the genus *Hemerocallis*. "They're not all orange," some utter incredulously, referring to the ubiquitous tangerine-hued daylilies that




Gloriously red, round and ruffled, 'Siloam Paul Watts' would be a standout anywhere. The yellow throat intensifies its reddish hue.

festoon our roadsides in early summer. Brilliant orange beauties do excite and energize the display, but there are also hues of pure white, cream, pale yellow, gold, peach, salmon, light pink, rose, crimson, maroon, orchid, violet, purple, and all the shades in between. And as for form, there are singles, doubles, ruffled and re-curved petals, spider shapes, miniatures, and more. Some are even fragrant. All bloom just a day, but each *scape* (the stem of a daylily that carries the flowers) can produce a prolific succession of blooms over several weeks. In short, there are more to daylilies than most people think.

MOTHER NATURE KNOWS BEST

For the Swains, daylilies were the delightful surprise after a harsh disappointment. Located next to a stream in rural Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, the

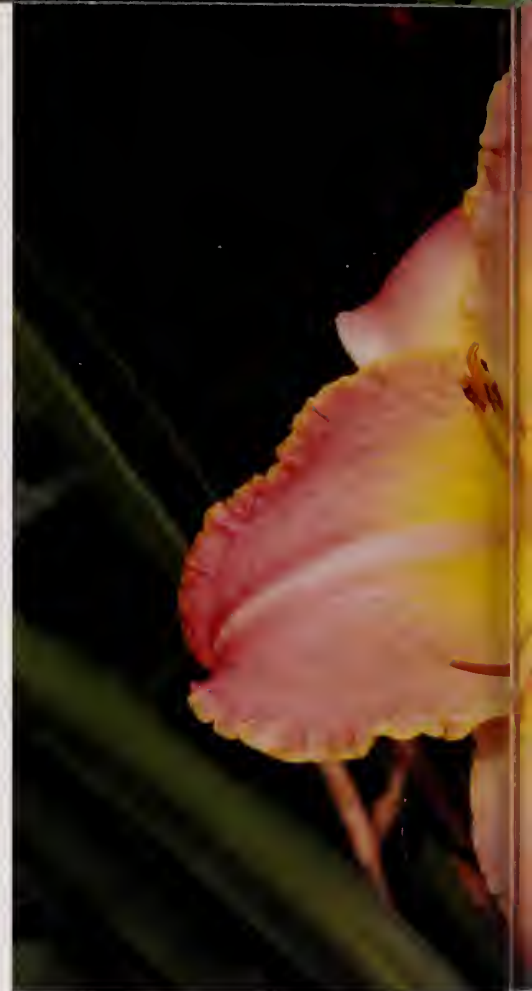


The crinkly, crepe-like petals of fragrant 'Ruffled Dude' contrast with its delicate coloration.



Above: The huge, 8-10 inch flowers are just one reason 'Kindly Light' may be the best spider daylily.

Right: If your garden lacks class, 'Highland Lord' can impart its majesty.



Swain garden once featured close to 300 roses. Then a flood came. Disease-stricken, all but a handful of the roses succumbed that season. "What a disheartening experience," recalls Douglas. "But surprisingly, a row of daylilies I planted thrived spectacularly in the moist soil."

Few plants are as forgiving as daylilies," he continues, "Still, they do respond to care." In dry spells, he's been known to coax an extra inch or more in size from the next day's bloom, thanks to a nice hose soaking. Cultivars differ, of course, and while daylilies are a highly tolerant plant, some perform better in midsummer heat than others, and most dislike shade and high humidity. For the optimum show, half a day of sunlight is usually desirable. Douglas, as well as other daylily enthusiasts, advises any gardener embarking on a grand daylily planting to focus on varieties bred in the region where they're to be planted. And like most perennials, daylilies will reward you with more flowers if divided every few years.



Above: Shading lends a rich dimension to this pair of late-blooming, pastel 'Country Melody' flowers. **Below Right:** An older variety, 'Siloam Bo Peep' adds a charming touch. The rapidly-forming clumps escalate the prolific display of 5-inch flowers.

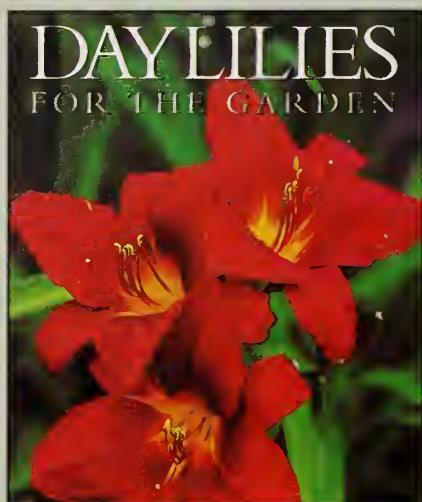
DAYLILIES AT HOME IN MANY SETTINGS

A trained artist, Douglas simply loves to work in his garden. "It's a joy," he declares. These days, the part-formal/part-country garden is evolving toward a formal English style. The garden already features the divided rooms that express the affinity Ann and Douglas feel toward English gardens. Happily, daylilies are equally effective in a formal or naturalized setting.

Myriad ornamentals form the background to the daylilies. Obviously a connoisseur, Douglas now seeks the new and unusual. He looks for depth of color, how well a variety holds its color, different heights, bud count, fragrance, flower size, unique blend of hues or shading. Extra-early and late varieties to extend his two-month gardening season especially pique his interest as do new varieties that rebloom later in the season.

Finally, Douglas praises the work of current daylily hybridizers, including





Daylily Lore and Cultivation

For a visually stunning look at daylilies, take a peek at *Daylilies for the Garden*, a beautiful new reference book by expert Graeme Grosvenor (Timber Press, hardcover, 176 pp., \$34.95). As Grosvenor notes, the daylily originated in Asia, but it derives its name from ancient

Greece. In Greek, the word *hemero* means "one day" and *callis* means "beauty." From this, Linnaeus—the father of botanical nomenclature—created the name *Hemerocallis* in the mid-eighteenth century. Still, many of us simply refer to it as a "daylily," although it is not a member of the lily family at all. (To some, however, it looks like an Asiatic lily.)

As for cultivation, there are different daylilies for different regions. In the Northeast, we should grow ones that go dormant in winter, versus the evergreen species that flourish in warmer climates. Daylilies will grow in just about any soil (heavy loam to light sandy soil), aren't fussy about pH, and rank among the most durable plants Northeast gardeners can choose from. They prefer, but do not require full sun. According to the author, they will bloom in proportion to the amount of light they receive—in short, the more sun, the better the bloom. Some red and purple cultivars, however, may require partial shading during the hottest part of the day.

Grosvenor recommends planting daylilies in soil worked about 6-12 inches deep and improved with compost. Mulching is also beneficial for daylilies, allowing for the maximum retention of water.

Finally, Grosvenor adds that dividing the plants every three years is a good rule of thumb, but by no means a strict one. Once, however, a plant gives a weak display of blooms, it's telling you that it is time to dig up the clump and divide it. At this point, you can either share your daylily dividend with a friend...or simply cook it up for dinner. As noted in our May, 1997 story "Delicious, Edible Daylilies," the *Hemerocallis* is completely edible and has been considered a delectable part of Chinese cuisine for centuries. Beautiful, durable, and edible—what more could one ask of a flower?

—Pete Prown

More Fine Daylily Books

- *Daylilies: The Perfect Perennial* by Lewis Hill, Nancy Hill & Robin Brickman (Storey Comm., 1991)
- *The Gardener's Guide to Growing Daylilies* by Diana Grenfell (Timber Press, 1998)
- *Hemerocallis: Daylilies* by Walter Erhardt (Timber Press, 1993)
- *Hemerocallis, The Daylily* by R.W. Munson Jr. (Timber Press, 1993)

SOURCES

- Call or visit your local garden center. Just about every retail outlet carries an assortment of daylilies. There are also numerous mail-order resources on the Internet. Also try:

Woodside Nursery

327 Beebe Run Road
Bridgeton, NJ 08302
(856) 451-2162

Iron Gate Gardens

2271 County Line Road
Kings Mountain, NC 28086
(704) 435-6178

- For information on daylilies, contact the Delaware Valley Daylily Society, c/o Cathy Tomlinson, 788 N. Reeds Road, Downingtown, PA 19335, (610) 458-0177.
- 2000 American Hemerocallis Society Convention July 13-15, Philadelphia, PA. Info: Joan Jackson (610) 647-7905

Darrel Apps, Pauline Henry, and Van Sellers, as well as the pioneering work of earlier horticulturists who have given us significant advances. Over 40,000 daylilies are now registered. There must be, Douglas concludes, one or two just for you! 📖

Dorothy Noble is a longtime *Green Scene* writer who covered new plant varieties in the January 2000 issue. Bob Ferguson is a professional photographer who specializes in capturing horticultural images in glorious detail.



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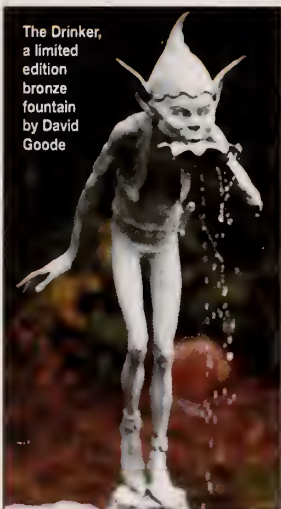
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Invasive

An invasive beauty, purple loosestrife is seen here growing along the edges of the Susquehanna River.

A SPECIAL REPORT ON NATURE'S TRUE ALIEN INTRUDERS

Story by Adam Levine

When I was a kid, oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) grew on an eight-foot stockade fence at the back end of my mother's Connecticut garden. "Invasive" wasn't a term in vogue in the late 1960s, but it didn't take a botanical genius to imagine that this vigorous vine might have pulled the fence apart if we hadn't hacked it to the ground every spring. The plant was a volunteer, probably emanating from a bird dropping, but Mom was nonetheless unwilling to get rid of it completely. Each summer it grew back to the top of the fence, and by fall it was cloaked with the red and yellow berries that my mother and so many other people love. She used yards of the berry-laden vine in her dried wreaths and arrangements—bits of the garden, brought inside for the winter, that consoled her until the following spring.

No one who has ever seen bittersweet berries on the vine or in a vase would argue against their beauty. In fact, the editors of *Invasive Plants: Weeds of the Global Garden*, a Brooklyn Botanic Garden handbook, estimate that about 150 of the 300 most problematic non-native invasive plants in the continental U.S. were introduced precisely because of their attractiveness, for use in ornamental horticulture. But beauty can

Plants

sometimes be insidious, as it tends to blind us to the true nature of the things we admire. Writes *New England Wildflower* editor Sarah Blair Shonbrun in a special issue on invasive plants: “We’re not trying to convince you that these plants are ugly or evil; only that their unchecked growth can have a devastating effect on our native plants and their natural habitats.”

One consequence of oriental bitter-sweet’s escape from gardens, according to Ann F. Rhoads, director of botany at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, is that stands of native bitter-sweet (*Celastrus scandens*), out-competed by its Asian cousin, have declined dramatically in the past 50 years. More broadly, some invasive plants cause billions of dollars in farm crop damage, while others cover millions of acres and cause large-scale alterations to natural ecosystems. The problem landed in the national spotlight in 1999, when President Clinton signed an executive order ordering Federal agencies to report on ways they plan to deal with invasive plants within their jurisdictions.

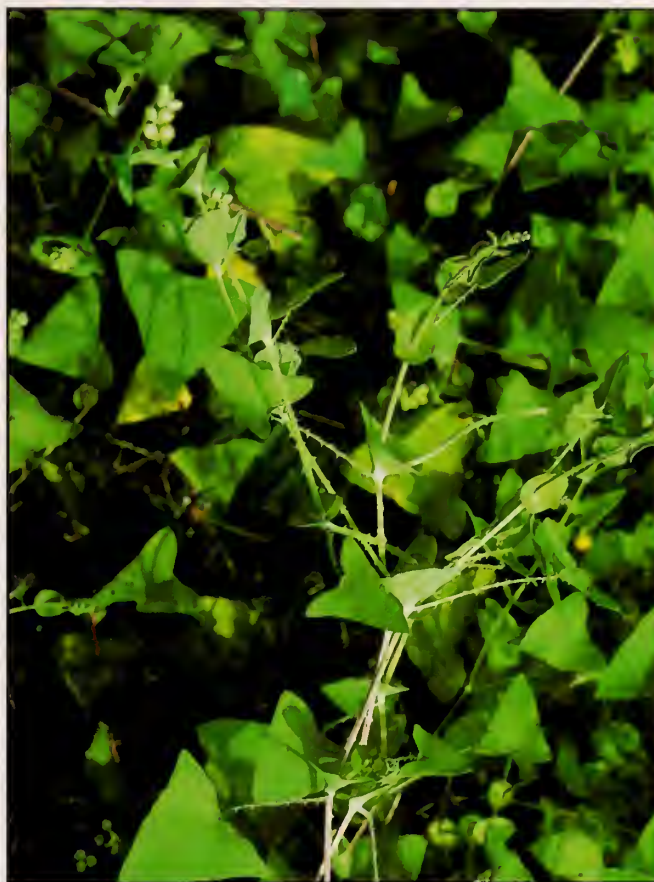
NATURAL HABITATS?

In the Northeastern U.S. today, many woodland areas are actually second or third growth, and non-native plants that “escaped from cultivation” (to use the botanists’ phrase) have been a presence in the landscape for more than 300 years. In urban and suburban areas where open space is at a premium, many people think anything green is good, failing to realize that much of this greenery thrives only at the expense of native plants. A study of Philadelphia’s Wissahickon Valley, for example, found

that out of 103 woody plant species, 57 (or 55%) are non-native—a problem aggravated by the overabundance of deer, who prefer to nibble on the natives. Nationwide, according to the federal Plant Conservation Alliance, “Invasions of non-native plants are the second greatest threat to native [plant] species, after direct habitat destruction.”

Most experts agree that more basic research needs to be done on the impact of exotic intruders on native plant communities. Still harder to quantify is their impact on “biodiversity”—that delicate balance of relationships between soil, groundwater, plants and animals that evolves over many millennia in an undisturbed area. Even without hard data, however, it should be clear to any observant person that many invasives cause serious problems simply by their sheer numbers. Stream banks crowded with Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*), wetlands choked with purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), trees on woodland edges buried under clambering vines—these and similar scenes involving other exotic plants are depressingly familiar. The following description of the effects of purple loosestrife, from

Below: The dreaded ‘mile-a-minute’ vine grows invasively all over our area. Its thick carpet of vines can completely grow over and shroud whole trees and shrubs.



Photos courtesy of Ann F. Rhoads/Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania

the Brooklyn Botanic Garden handbook, also holds true for many other invasives: “Extensive, permanent stands replace native vegetation, threaten rare and endangered plant species and reduce the availability of food and shelter for wildlife.”

PENNSYLVANIA'S NOXIOUS WEEDS

Pennsylvania’s “Noxious Weed Control Act,” administered by the state Department of Agriculture, lists 11 weeds that are “illegal to propagate, sell or transport...in the Commonwealth.” A majority, such as various thistles and

sorghums and jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*), are weeds detrimental to “row crops” such as soybeans, alfalfa, and corn. But several—multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), mile-a-minute vine (*Polygonum perfoliatum*), Kudzu vine (*Pueraria lobata*), and non-native purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)—also cause problems in wetlands, meadows and woodlands.

Since this law focuses on agricultural weeds, however, it covers only a small fraction of the invasive plants in Pennsylvania. The state Department of

Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has a more comprehensive list that includes 40 other non-native species. Some are outright weeds that no one would ever think of selling, such as garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*), and Japanese knotweed. Yet many others are popular landscape plants, among them Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), fiveleaf akebia (*Akebia quinata*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), maiden grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*), winged euonymous (*Euonymus alatus*), Japanese spiraea (*Spiraea japonica*), and Callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana*). All these are still widely available and often recommended by nurseries and garden centers. As gardeners, however, our first line of defense against invasives is to resist the urge to plant these pretty but problematic plants in our own gardens.

A GARDENER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Plant exploration is big business these days, for the sole reason that we gardeners eagerly snap up new species and varieties as fast as the nurseries can propagate them. Many of these new plants are native to the same areas as those that, in the years after their introduction, ended up on invasive plant lists. Responsible nurseries run trials on plants before offering them to the public, and look for certain traits that predict invasiveness. But there is no sure way to predict how a non-native plant will behave in its new environment. As gardeners, it is our responsibility to carefully monitor any new introductions to our home gardens, eradicate them before they become a problem in the landscape beyond, and spread the word about these potential invaders among other gardeners.

I live in a small suburban community outside Philadelphia which has a problem landscape all too common in this region. Besides a host of other invasive plants, ivy and pachysandra have escaped from gardens and cover dozens of woodland acres. This thick green carpet is impenetrable to many plants, including

most native shrubs and wildflowers. Still, most of my neighbors look at this greenery and see it as picturesque, romantic, even beautiful. Some are even grateful that these and other invasive plants spread so easily on their own, reckoning that this is just more of a good thing, a gift to them from Mother Nature.

It isn't a gift. Sure, some invasives may look beautiful, but we can't delude ourselves by imagining that their spread is the result of natural evolution. They have been artificially introduced to our greenspaces by humans and, as a result, can dramatically alter the ecology of any natural area in which they take hold. We need to remember this the next time we're tempted to plant a Norway maple or English ivy or any of their ilk. We might do better to give the native plants that still grow all around us, though not as abundantly as in the past, another chance in our gardens. Some are surprisingly showy, especially selections chosen for superior leaf color, flower size, and form. But we shouldn't overlook the plainer native species, which can provide us with just as deep a satisfaction as that latest, rare Asian acquisition. Natives are plants that know their place, and by using them, we know we will be doing no harm. ☐

Adam Levine is a longtime *Green Scene* writer and a contributing editor to *Garden Design*. He recently wrote about the “Central Feature” exhibit from this year's Philadelphia Flower Show in the March issue. (And, yes, he finally won his first blue ribbon, too.)



Above: “The plant that ate the South,” the quick-growing kudzu vine has now moved north, as seen here in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park.

SOURCES

- *Invasive Plants: Weeds of the Global Garden*, edited by John M. Randall and Janet Marinelli. This Brooklyn Botanic Garden handbook is one of the best sources on U.S. invasives. Includes an illustrated encyclopedia and control options for each species. [Available from PHS McLean Library.]
- “Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania” and “Landscaping with Native Plants in Pennsylvania.” Available from the DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, P.O. Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552, (717) 787-3444.
- “Controlling Invasive Plants.” To request a copy, send a SASE to: Natural Lands Trust, Hildacy Farm, 1031 Palmers Mill Road, Media, PA 19063, (610) 353-5587.
- Useful websites dealing with invasive plants include: The Nature Conservancy (<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu>); Plant Conservation Alliance (www.nps.gov/plants); and the Maryland Native Plant Society (www.geocities.com/RainForest/Vines/2996/publications/invasives.htm)

To report violators of the Pennsylvania Noxious Weed Control Act, or for copies of the act, contact: Botanist, PA Dept. of Agriculture, 2301 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408, (717) 772-5209.

The Heat Treatment

HOW EXPERTS CONTROL INVASIVE PLANTS WITH FIRE

by Jody Petersen


When faced with another frustrating season battling multiflora rose, Canada thistle, and Japanese honeysuckle, the besieged backyard gardener may be tempted to just burn the whole garden down and start fresh.

Interestingly, the Natural Lands Trust—a land preservation organization based in Media, PA—does just that. On large expanses of land, fire is a powerful management tool. The NLT uses “controlled burning” to maintain meadows and keep invasive weeds at a tolerable level on various sites within its thousands of acres of protected lands. No tedious chore, this kind of weeding is downright thrilling!

Of course, playing with fire is serious business. The NLT fire management team's ten members are trained in basic fire management, retested every year on physical fitness, equipped with state-of-the-art fire fighting equipment, and led by a volunteer fireman. The fires are done in the spring or fall, when there is less un-burnable green matter. On

burn day, the fire team waits until 11 am, after the dew dries, and suits up in fireproof gear. At the signal, the “igniters” use their drip torches to start fires around the perimeter of the burn sight. The fire burns towards the center, hot and high with flames sometimes reaching 20 feet. A pumper truck is nearby, just in case. Burns are done every 2-3 years on each site, though it may take 10 years to achieve the desired results.

The invasives still re-sprout and germinate after a fire, but less with each burn. The burning actually promotes the regrowth of native grasses and wildflowers which are better adapted to natural burning cycles than invasives.

In all, fire is an effective, natural way of controlling invasive plant species (not to mention the inherent glee one feels upon hearing the hiss of a burning multiflora rose. It is revenge for years of habitat loss and scratched-up skin from thorns). But please, leave it to the professionals! 

Jody Petersen is the perennial specialist at Mostardi's Nursery in Newtown Square, PA, and she battles invasives in her Bucks County garden.



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EASY ROSES



5 Low-Maintenance Beauties

Story by Patricia A. Taylor

Are you one of the many gardeners who have spurned the beauty and intoxicating fragrance of roses because they are so labor intensive? Take heart—and take a second look. Over the past two decades, the great horticultural houses in France, Germany, and England have been introducing exquisite roses that are gorgeous and low-maintenance.

These new roses—and there are

hundreds of them—are known for their long blooming periods and minimal maintenance, even in the notoriously rose-challenged Northeast. All these plants require at least half a day of full sun, well-drained soil, watering during drought periods and, for superabundant blooms, a douse of slow-release fertilizer at the beginning of the growing season. So without further ado, here are five of the world's easiest roses.

Left: 'Tamora'.

Below: Carefree
Delight



For The Garden



Clockwise from top left: Carefree Wonder, Flower Carpet Pink, 'Robusta'.

TAMORA

"'Tamora' is one of David Austin's finest roses," says Clair G. Martin, curator of the Rose Collections at the Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California, and author of *100 English Roses for the American Garden*. Austin, a noted English rosarian, has created a stir in horticultural circles with his development of a revolutionary class of roses that feature luxurious unfolding blossoms, a beguiling fragrance, repeat blooming, and disease resistance.

'Tamora', appearing in 1983, is among his earliest introductions. "I also believe," Martin continues, "that 'Tamora' is one of the easiest roses one can grow. It is outstanding as

a hedge, a container plant, or a single specimen in the garden. Hardy throughout Zones 5-10, it features a lovely apricot-pink color that reminds me of a maiden's blush."

This rose just can't stop blooming, either. Bright orange-red buds open on 3-foot stems in spring and continue to do so until struck down by heavy frost. Each flower releases a strong myrrh fragrance, which is particularly delightful on warm summer evenings. At Huntington, Martin has planted 'Tamora' to form a crescent-shaped hedge in front of a restored 17th-century limestone structure called the Temple of Love. "It's absolutely gorgeous," he says. "Unfortunately,

it is so popular with photographers that the walkway is impassable on weekends."

CAREFREE DELIGHT

The shrub rose Carefree Delight is beautiful all year, according to rosarian Steven Scanniello, author of *A Year of Roses*. "Its five-petaled, carmine pink and white flowers bloom in massive clusters from late May to the hardest frost," he explains. "The orange-red seed hips provide an extra bonus in fall and are handsome in bouquets. Finally, in winter, the bare canes are plum-tinted and can be pruned, if you like, into interesting shapes."

Thriving throughout Zones 4-9, the award-winning Carefree Delight reaches 4 to 5 feet in height and has a spread of about 6 feet. When he worked as a rosarian at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Scanniello used it in many areas, as a hedge around borders in some areas and as a border end point in others. When used as a hedge, he simply sheared the plants straight across in early spring. "Because Carefree Delight is so disease-resistant, the foliage is a beautiful glossy green throughout the heat of summer," he adds, "And while the flowers are not fragrant, they are handsome in cut-flower arrangements."

CAREFREE WONDER

"Carefree Wonder is perhaps the easiest rose that I have used in the landscape," says Jim Browne of the Memphis Botanic Garden and author of *The American Guides: Rose Gardening*. "This hardy shrub rose has few disease problems," he explains, "It also blooms for an extended period of time, grows even while neglected, and—as the Timex ads say—just keeps on ticking."

Carefree Wonder is also perfect for gardens throughout Zones 4-9. Its flowers are semi-double and a softer pink than those on Carefree Delight. Its orange-red hips begin to appear in late summer, adding dots of color to the masses of flowers. This rose is also slightly shorter than Carefree Delight and has a maximum spread of 4 feet. This greater

compactness allows it to shine as a specimen plant in borders. When planted *en masse*, it forms ribbons of color that are perfect for edging driveways or as natural fences. Thriving in a wide variety of soils, Carefree Wonder tolerates partial shade, wind, and environmental stress. Its long-lasting beauty and high disease-resistance earned it an All-America Rose Selections (AARS) award in 1991.

FLOWER CARPET PINK

As horticulturist for St. Louis County in Missouri, Douglas R. Wolter is responsible for choosing beautiful, low-maintenance flowers for an environmentally difficult, 20-acre urban site. And when he's working as a commercial and residential landscaper, Wolter must select similar plants to keep clients happy. In both roles, he is a steady user and staunch advocate of Flower Carpet Pink. He likes it for its looks, carefree nature, and resilience.

Developed by noted German breeder Werner Noack and introduced in 1991, this rose is covered with iridescent rose-pink blossoms with a white center. Mature plants reach about 2 feet in height and have a spread of 4 feet. Each plant can produce up to 4,000 flowers per season. Late April last year, Wolter reported that his Flower Carpet Pink plants were drenched in buds and "getting ready to rock 'n' roll!" They also bloom right through St. Louis' hot, humid summers. And in the German All-Deutsche Rose Trial, Flower Carpet Pink received the highest rating ever given for natural disease resistance.

Although this sterile rose does not produce seed hips, it often holds its dark green leaves well into winter. Touted to flourish from Minneapolis to Key West (Zones 4-11), Flower Carpet Pink should be situated in areas with good air circulation in the warmer parts of its range and requires some winter protection, particularly the first year after



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planting, in Zones 4-6. This rose can be used to carpet large areas, as it is in St. Louis County plantings, or even as a lawn substitute. A beautiful and prolific bloomer in hanging baskets and large containers, Flower Carpet Pink can be festive, too: last year, Wolter twined Christmas lights among the plants surrounding his home.

ROBUSTA

"If I could name only one exceptionally low-maintenance rose, it would be the Kordes hybrid rugosa, 'Robusta,'" says Ohio resident Peter Schneider, author of *Taylor's Guide to Roses* (Houghton Mifflin). That's high praise indeed from a man who has grown over 1,400 rose varieties and who, with Beverly R. Dobson, compiles and edits the *Combined Rose List*, the annual directory of all roses known to be in commerce worldwide. "I liked this rose a lot when I lived in the suburbs, and I like it even more out here in the country," he notes. "It's indestructible, practically disease-proof, and absolutely beautiful, with large cherry red blooms glowing against its dark green foliage."

Rugosas are known for their healthy vigor, cold hardiness, and resistance to salt spray. The Kordes Nursery in Germany capitalized on these traits in breeding 'Robusta' and introduced it in 1979. This thorny rose is perfect as a hedge or foundation plant for coastal gardens and cool areas (Zones 3-8). 'Robusta' is an upright plant decorated with fragrant flowers from head to toe; depending on growing conditions, it can reach 5 to 7 feet in height.

Rugosas are also known for their beautiful seed hips and colorful fall foliage and 'Robusta' shines in both areas. By Labor Day weekend, the plant features a combination of long, pointed red buds, single-petaled flowers, colorful hips the size of cherry tomatoes, and yellow to orange leaves mixed among the dark green foliage. 🌿

Patricia A. Taylor loves low-maintenance plants and describes over 500 of them in her book *Easy Care Native Plants* (Holt).

Sources

- Call (800) 580-5930 for local sources of Flower Carpet roses (in pink, red, white, appleblossom). Just punch in your zip code and you will get information on three nearby retailers who carry these roses.

Carefree Delight and Carefree Wonder are also available at many garden centers in our region.

- **David Austin Roses**
15393 Highway 64 West
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fax (903) 526-1900
www.davidaustinroses.com
[Offers Carefree Wonder, Robusta, Tamora, and Carefree Beauty.]

- **Sam Kedem Greenhouse & Nursery**
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(651) 437-7516,
www.kedemroses.com
[Offers Robusta, Carefree Delight, Carefree Wonder, and Tamora.]

- **Heirloom Old Garden Roses**
24062 Riverside Drive, N.E.
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(503) 538-1576
[Offers Carefree Delight and Robusta.]

- **Wayside Gardens**
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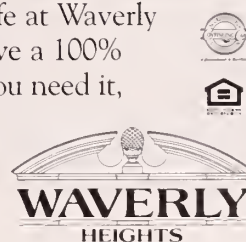




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From a Weed Patch to a Wonder

Renovating a Driveway Border

Story and photography by Walter Chandoha



Once a weedy eyesore, the author's driveway garden now overflows with 'Inca' marigold, 'Margarita' sweet-potato vine (*Ipomoea*), red 'Splendissima' and purple 'Victoria' salvias, and the ornamental grass, *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus.'

I've often joked that the overgrown patch along my driveway was actually my "low-maintenance garden." When the daylilies and epimedium bloomed, it looked fairly good, but from mid-summer on, it became a messy, weedy eyesore on our property. Over the past decades, as our kids grew up, my wife Maria and I gardened extensively, with beds springing up all over the place, but somehow we missed the driveway garden. There wasn't a year that went by that she didn't ask me to do something about it, and every year I put it on my to-do list. Still, it always seemed like one of those infinitely postponable chores. Sadly, Maria died a few years ago without seeing that bed made into an attractive garden. Now I felt it was time to restore this spot as a tiny memorial to her.

It was my grandson Cody who gave me the impetus to put restoring the driveway garden on the front burner. My daughter Chiara was five months pregnant with Cody when Maria died, so he never knew her. But from seeing many photographs of her amongst flowers, he knew she liked to garden. One day when he and I were pulling weeds in my "tropical garden," he asked me if I've ever created a garden especially for her. I sat speechless as I remembered the empty promises I made to her every time she asked me to restore the driveway garden. Right then and there I told Cody we would build a garden for Grandma Maria.

Commencing work this past Labor Day weekend, I had to figure out the most expeditious way to get rid of the weeds on the overgrown bank. Since we were at the tail end of one of the driest summers on record, the soil was as hard as cement and the weeds were so firmly anchored that when I pulled, all I got was a handful of stems. I considered mowing the bank with my mulching mower, but the slopes were too steep to do it safely. Why not a weed-whacker? I asked my friend Bill Enea to use his machine and in 15 minutes, the weeds were down and reduced to a bunch of mulch.

Next came a technique I borrowed from another friend Pat Lanza, author of the book *Lasagna Gardening* (Rodale Press). Instead of tilling the soil, she advocates covering weeds or sod with assorted layers of organic matter and then planting in the resulting compost several months later. Rather than layering chopped leaves and weeds, grass clippings, peat moss, newspapers and kitchen wastes on the planting site, as she advocates, I used compost from a pile I started last year. This well-rotted compost was spread over the chopped weeds 6-inches high, then



Top: Weeds run amok before the renovation begins.

Middle: Once the weeds had been chopped down, the author generously spreads compost on top using the "lasagna garden" technique. **Bottom:** With the bed prepared, he tries out plants in different places to determine the correct spacing and color combinations.

dusted with a bucketful of wood ashes. Now the bed was ready for planting.

Because this past summer had been so dry, I did most of my flower gardening in containers. Fortunately I had lots of potted plants: marigolds, zinnias, pentas, caladiums, coleus, red and purple salvia, and even some perennials and ornamental grasses. Many of these potted flowers were in full bloom, so it was easy to design the garden by placing the pots atop the compost where they looked best. After switching a few pots around here and there, holes were dug and fertil-

ized, the root ball removed from each pot, and then planted.

Most of the plants were in the ground by midday the Sunday before Labor Day. The weather prediction for Labor Day was torrential rains, so rather than risk having the compost washed off the bank, I mulched it with 4-5 inches of shredded bark. It did its job. Ten days later, the tail end of Hurricane Floyd dumped 10 inches of rain on the garden. A little of the mulch washed off the bank, but it was nothing compared with what would have happened had the bank not been mulched. The compost and all the plants would have been floating down the road.

When the weather stabilized and the plants resumed growing, I saw there was a need to include what I call "exclamation points" in



LEFT The author's partner (and grandson) Cody lends a helping hand.



ABOVE: To add a vertical dimension to the garden, container plants cleverly sit on top of other inverted pots.



LEFT: A soothing melange of cool and hot colors, this area includes caladiums, 'Profusion Cherry' zinnia, 'Victoria' salvia, an unknown red pentas, 'Powis Castle' artemisia, 'Mardi Gras' coleus, and the miscanthus grass, 'Morning Light.'



ABOVE: The finished product—a wonderful floral display that's a far cry from its distant, weedy past.

the garden. It needed some vertical elements. To achieve this, I often set potted flowers atop inverted flowerpots of the same size. Among my potted flowers this summer I had both yellow and orange 'Inca' marigolds growing with 'Margarita' sweet-potato vine. These elevated pots were just what the far end of the garden needed. And to give them still more height, I dumped an extra 6 inches of compost in the area before setting them in place. The marigolds now gave me a "backwall" about 36 inches high. In front of the marigolds, there was a very visible gap which I filled with another ornamental grass. And despite the deep compost and the shredded bark, the daylilies that were weed-whacked began popping up through everything. Next summer, they'll add more color.

Now, at last, Maria has her driveway

garden. Considering how easy it was to do and how little time it actually took, I feel like a heel for not having made the garden when she was here to enjoy it. But, if she will use her influence with the great Weatherman in the sky to bless her long overdue garden with warmth and sunshine, the driveway garden will be there for all to enjoy for another month or two before being zapped by the frost. After that happens, I plan to replant the bank with lots of pink and purple mums and flowering cabbages for fall color, and dozens of flowering bulbs to color Maria's garden next spring. 🌱

Well-known garden photographer Walter Chandoha has been writing and shooting for *Green Scene* since 1985. His last article on gardening "to-do lists" appeared in the March 1999 issue.



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Kudos & Comments

First, I really liked the March issue of *Green Scene*. It was alive! I especially liked "Uncommon Beauties" and want to get them all. In the future, though, I'd like to see more garden experience pieces and how-to articles. Otherwise, a fine job.

L.K.
via the Internet

Your January issue was a knockout! The "Room With A View" cover story was colorful and interesting, as was the intriguing Letter from the Editor on "The Winter Gardener." An all-around superior job, as usual. Beautiful cover, too.

J. Bonner
Lancaster, PA

Bulb Banter

Thank you many times for the November article on "bulb garden pots." I have had fun and success with six pots following Art Wolk's suggestions—so much so that my garden club will spend one of its fall meetings making them. I started my pots at the end of November and had the first one bloom by Valentine's Day. Thanks again.

Kathryn West
Midway, Kentucky

I enjoy reading *Green Scene*. The articles are generally great to read and I especially like the new "Potting Shed" section, with its hints and tips. (I bought *Rosa* 'Knockout' at Scott Arboretum this fall. I further enjoy the practical "how-to" stories, such as Art's bulb-forcing project (Nov. 1999). I wonder if he can recommend how many bulbs to plant in each pot.

Mary Liz Lewis
Summit, New Jersey

Art responds: "For a pot that will be double-layered with daffodils, Crocus, Iris, and Muscari, use nine daffodils, eight tulips, three hyacinths, 18 muscari, 22 iris, and 12 crocus. For a pot in which everything is single-layered, use five daffodils, eight tulips, three hyacinths, 10 muscari, 12 iris, and seven crocus."

Gold Medal Reader

At the end of the article on PHS Gold Medal Plants in the November '99 issue ("Woody Wonders"), you noted that many of these plants can be seen at Chanticleer. Since Chanticleer is closed in winter you might also mention that various Gold Medal winners can be seen at the Morris Arboretum, Scott Arboretum, and Longwood Gardens. That way in winter your readers won't miss the bright red berries of *Ilex verticillata* 'Scarlett O'Hara' (1996 winner), *I.* 'Winter Red' (1995), and *I.* 'Sparkleberry' (1988), in addition to the early spring bloom (Feb./March) of *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Diane' (1991).

Alexandra Basinski
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania

CORRECTION

On page 22 of the March 2000 issue, the *Juncus effusus* 'Spiralis' shown was inadvertently attributed to Alice Farley. This blue-ribbon winner was actually grown by Mary Jane Greenwood. Our apologies.



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BACKYARD

The Dry Look

A Trio of Drought Lovers for the Mid-Atlantic

Thanks to the unrelenting heat and water restrictions in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey, gardening was a *severe* subject last summer. Though I certainly had my share of browned lawn and desiccated trees, I also had islands of color. They were found in dry garden beds filled with native perennials that have evolved to withstand the weather extremes of our region...without pesticides or fertilizers. Let's look at three unusual drought lovers, all of which can tolerate the heat and dryness of summer.



Photo by Garden Image

PRAIRIE CONEFLOWER (*Ratibida pinnata*)

Found throughout midwestern prairies, these coneflowers are noted for their unusual drooping petals. Judging from last year's performance, they really like drought conditions: Usually blooming for three to four weeks in July, they flowered from late June to mid August.

In full sun, this 5-to-6-foot tall plant is a sturdy, structural presence in the garden. It assumes a more graceful presence in the open shade area where I have placed it. There, its long thin stems gracefully bend over, creating an arching shower of lemon-yellow flowers that hover only 2 or 3 feet above underlying plants.



WILD PETUNIA (*Ruellia humilis*)

I first saw this plant baking in full sun as it cascaded over the gray stone boulders of a Connecticut garden and it's a beauty. Wild petunia's floppy stems extend up to 2 feet and produce constant new flowers at the tip. It is perfect draping over a wall or trailing down a slope. While it's a spreader, rooting underground with stolons, it is not aggressive and escapees can easily be pulled in spring.

Photo by Patricia Taylor

CUP PLANT (*Silphium perfoliatum*)

Though frequently seen in sun gardens throughout its mid-continent haunts, cup plant is rarely found in East Coast borders. I think this would change if more people became acquainted with its carefree nature and the attractiveness in arrangements.



Photo by Flora Graphics

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All three plants:

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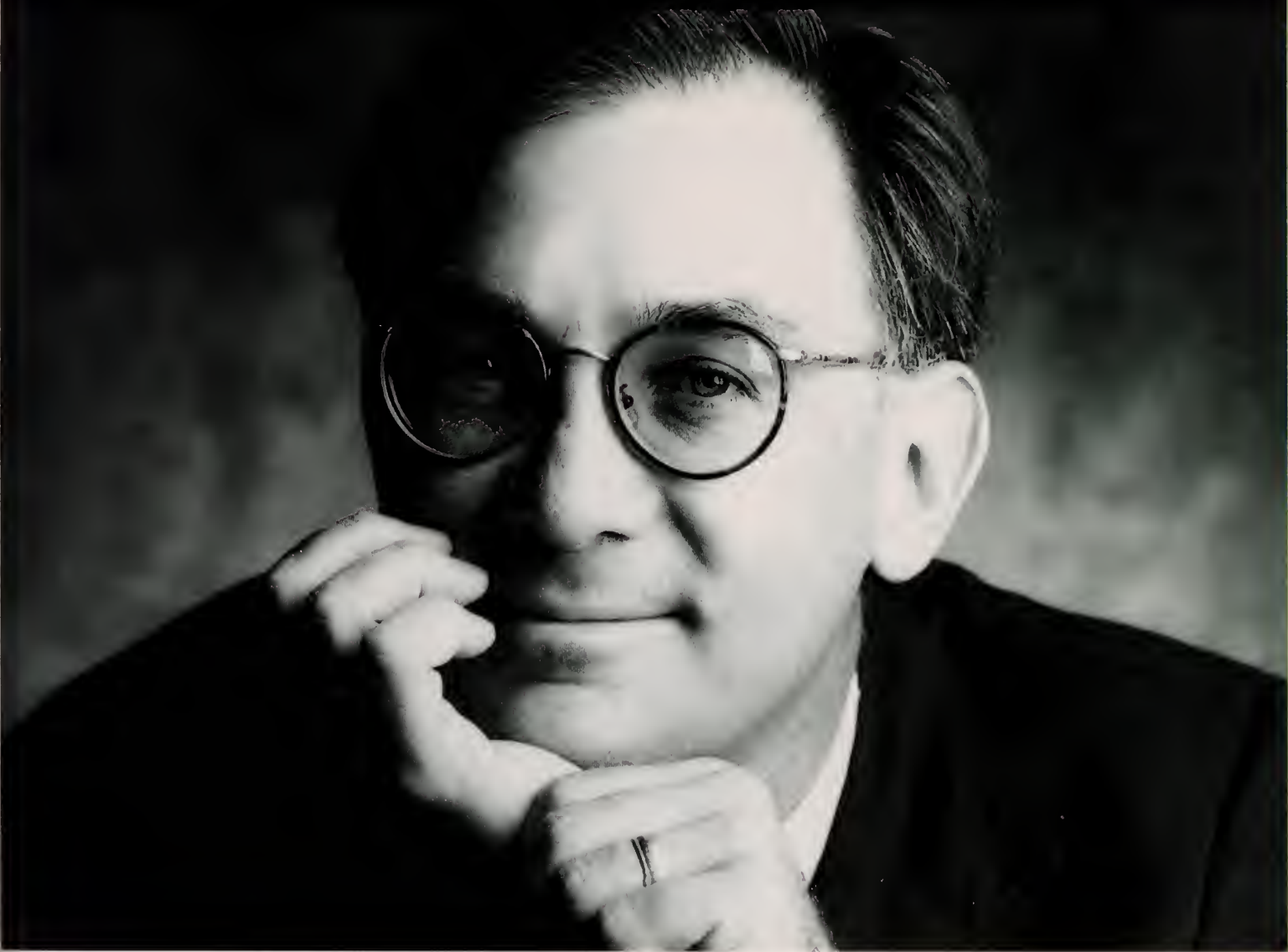
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Cup plant is a big (6 to 8 feet), bold, beautiful plant with calm yellow flowers. It too seems to favor drought conditions because, last year, it bloomed from mid-July to the end of August in my garden—a week or two longer than usual. Its popular name comes from the cup-like formations found at the periodic junctions of its leaves and stem. Rainwater often gathers within these areas, forming little pools from which you will occasionally see birds and butterflies drinking. How can you resist? ☑

—Patricia A. Taylor

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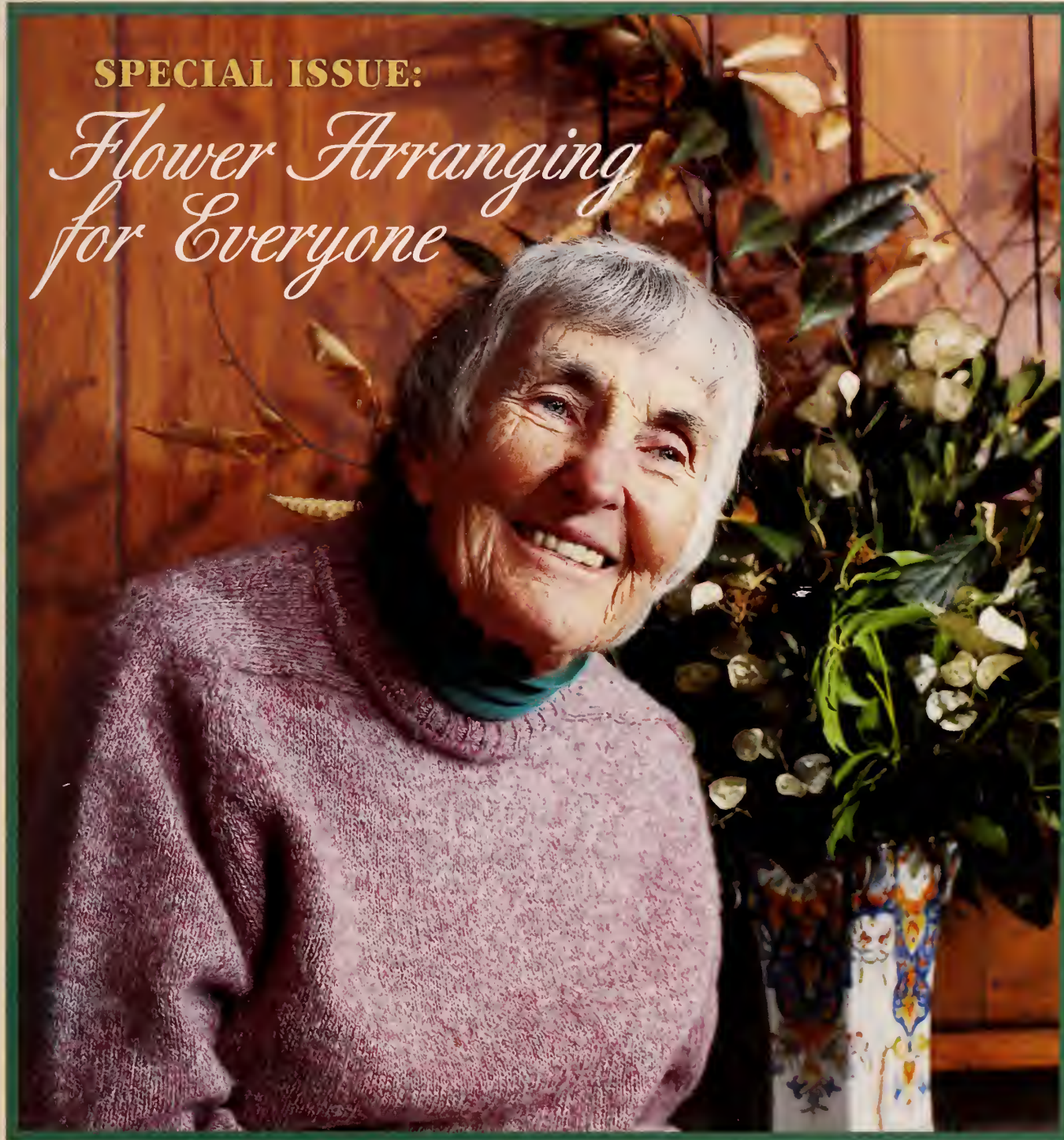
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Cathedral Village President, Bill Owens, recently announced the development of an extensive Horticultural Program. The focal point will be a large greenhouse and headhouse, currently under construction.

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Contents

- 6** Arranging 101
Learn the basics of flower arranging from local expert Jane Godshalk. From essential materials to the art of visual composition, here's a step-by-step guide to making your very first arrangement.
- 10** Flower Show Frenzy
Join us on the floor of the 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show as we witness an arranger in action in the Defined Space Classes. Captured in words and photographs, Jim Hayden shows us how he created his entry on the spot, from developing a design to putting on the finishing touches.
- 14** Ikebana Today
A world apart from Western arranging, ikebana is a Japanese design style that combines both minimalism and a desire to be closer to nature. Pamela Vu introduces us to the many "schools" of this ancient art form.

- 20** Where To Buy the Best Blossoms
It's great to read about exotic cut flowers, but where do you actually find them? Cheryl Lee Monroe gives us a behind-the-scenes look at the cut-flower industry, revealing many of the best places to find both great flowers...and great deals.
- 24** Winter Wonders
Famed Delaware Valley gardener Joanna Reed shares with us the secrets of her "Stick and Stuff" method, a style she employs all year long—even in the dead of winter.

- 30** Cutting Class
Lorraine Kiefer explains how to design and grow your own cutting garden. From zinnias to mums and so much more, you'll see how to grow flowers to cut and enjoy every day.
- 34** Classified Ads
- 36** Backyard
Arranging for the Altar

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society motivates people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

Cover Photo: A portrait of Joanna Reed by Harry Kalish

GREEN scene

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Letter From the Editor

Walter Chondoha



For many folks, flower arranging is the indoor side of summer gardening—indeed, why grow flowers outside if you can't cut a dozen or so to bring inside? For others, arranging can be a year-round hobby, a profitable vocation, or just pure artistic expression. But as we hope to show in this special issue

niques, all written by some of our region's best floral experts. You'll also find information on growing your own cutting garden; the intricacies of ikebana; putting together a stunning winter arrangement; and how to find the best deals on cut flowers. And we couldn't put this issue together without running a story about the Philadelphia Flower Show (here, we'll focus on one of

Like anything else, if you put in the time, you will be rewarded by years of glorious, much-admired arrangements.

In this issue of *Green Scene*, we will look at many different aspects of arranging—everything from “the basics” to more advanced tech-

The Arranger's Eye

of *Green Scene*, flower arranging is more than just a bunch of posies in a pot.

Flower arranging interests me because I have absolutely no talent for it. *None*. On occasion, I've tried to throw together an arrangement for the dining room table, only to end up with something resembling a 5th-grade science project. What I lack—and what all good arrangers have developed through experience—is “the eye.” This seemingly mystical eye is the guiding factor that allows the arranger to select a complementary array of flowers, foliage, and branches, and then meld them into a pleasing whole. It allows them to create designs imbued with a wonderful sense of balance, form, and scale. Finally, it helps them choose the perfect container in which to present the finished arrangement. Truthfully, though, there isn't anything magical about “the eye.” It is a skill gained by nothing less than practice, practice and, of course, more practice.

the hotly contested Competitive Classes). While the stories in this issue represent only a tip of the larger flower-arranging universe, together they will give you a solid primer on the subject, whether you're a seasoned pro or an enthusiastic amateur.

As for me, I hope to pick up a few tips to improve my oft-ailing arrangements, but more than that, I simply want to stand back and admire the sheer artfulness of this craft. Flower arranging is a wonderfully dynamic art form—an exciting flurry of live plants and foliage, inert materials, and the swift, creative whims of the arranger. To my mind, few other gardening forms are as visceral, eclectic, and *of-the-moment*.

Without further delay then, let us enter the sublime world of the flower arranger and see what thrilling visual treats they've whipped up for us.

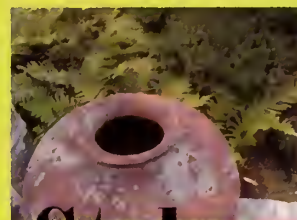
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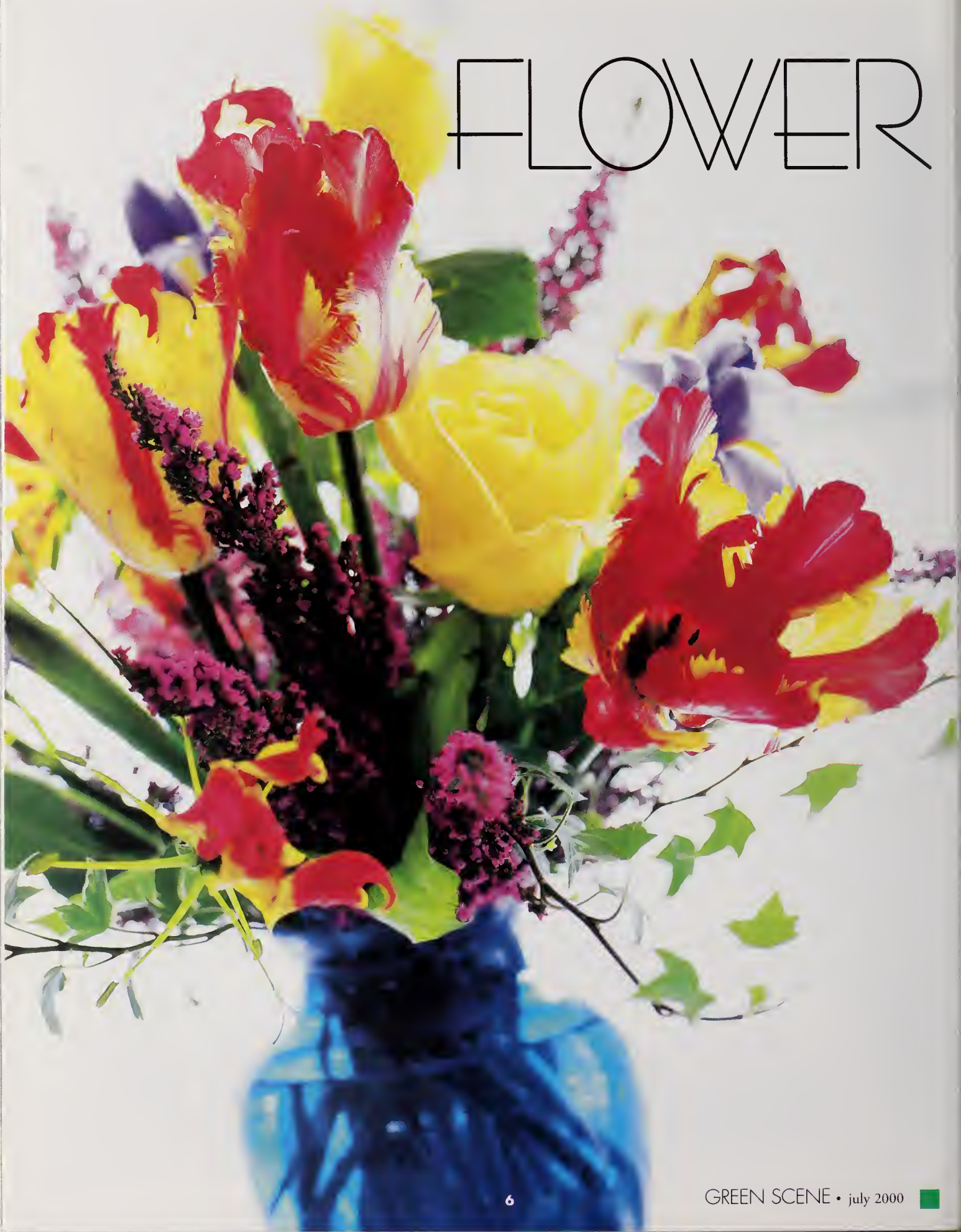


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FLOWER



ARRANGING: the basics

Flower arranging is a wonderful way to bring our garden indoors. It can be a daunting process, however, especially when you're a beginner. How do the "pros" whip up their incredible floral creations? The key is to learn the basic principles of flower arranging. With these principles under your belt, you'll be a skilled arranger in no time.

by Jane Godshalk

ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES

Flower arranging, like all art forms, is guided by basic design elements and principles. The *elements of design* are the tangible characteristics that can be seen and manipulated into a unified whole: light, space, line, form, size, color, texture, and pattern. The *principles of design*, meanwhile, are the intangible characteristics used to organize the elements: balance, proportion, rhythm, dominance, contrast, and scale. Consider them "your plan."

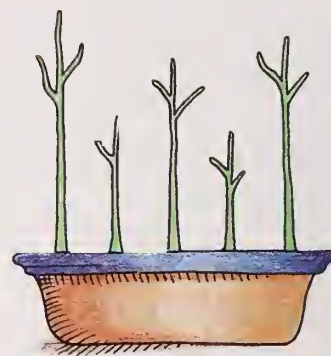
Balance is very important. An arrangement must not only be physically stable, but it must appear well balanced. This balance may be symmetrical, asymmetrical, or open. *Symmetrical balance* repeats the same materials on both sides of the arrangement creating a predictable formal effect. *Asymmetrical balance* is achieved with unequal weight on each side of a central vertical axis and creates a dynamic effect.



1. Formal or symmetrical balance



2. Asymmetrical balance



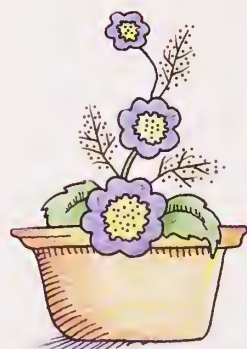
3. Open balance



4. Central focal point



5. Multiple focal areas



6. Rhythm is created by repetition of flower forms and gradation of flower size and the space between flowers

In traditional flower arranging, all materials radiate from a central focal point that is at the base of the central axis. **Open balance**, however, places materials as if they were growing in nature, like trees standing in a forest. In Diagram 5, for example, there is no single focal point, but several focal areas at the base of the container—this is open balance.

The principle of **rhythm** (or visual movement) through a design may be achieved by repetition and gradation of plant material. Placement of elements according to size and color or the space between forms causes the eye to move through a design.

Now we come to the principles of dominance and contrast, which are related. **Dominance** is the greater force of one element over another, such as a larger-sized flower or a stronger color. **Contrast** is placing unlike elements together. Both of these principles, when used properly, add interest to a design. When misused, however, they can take your arrangement out of balance or disrupt the rhythm.

GATHERING YOUR MATERIALS

To begin your first flower arrangement, you will need to have plant material (flowers, branches, leaves), mechanics (means of construction), and a container. For material selection, you may choose from several different places. Flowers and plant material from your own or a friend's garden can help make your arrangement unique. Flowers and foliage should not be picked in the heat of the day and must be conditioned if they are to last.

Now it's time to use your "eye." Flower arranging is a three-dimensional art that uses materials having their own unique colors, sizes, and shapes. When choosing colors, look to nature for examples of harmonious combinations. You will need different flower shapes or forms in your arrangement as well. These can be classified into four categories:

Line Material: Forms which give vertical direction to an arrangement (tall stems, branches).

Focal Flowers: Plants with strong shapes and colors which catch the eye (such as lilies, gerbera daisies).

Mass Flowers: Single-stemmed, rounded flowers (carnations).

Filler Flowers: Smaller blossoms, usually in clusters, that soften the space between larger materials (baby's breath, mini asters).

THE MECHANICS

Once you have your natural material, you will need to get your mechanics or means of control. To begin a simple arrangement, you will need clippers and/or floral scissors; floral foam (such as Oasis); floral tape or floral clay; a plastic prong to hold foam; a knife to cut foam; and a pin holder, which might be useful (but is optional).

Now you must choose your container. It should complement the flowers you will be using in size, color, and texture. A good container for a first-timer might be a low bowl with a wide opening, perhaps in a dark neutral color such as black, brown, or green.

With flowers, mechanics, and container in hand, you must now focus on your inspiration. If a room or container is not the focus of your idea, then often the season and its flowers are. Spring brings fresh bright green foliage, blossoming branches, and bulbs.

Late spring and early summer gives us lime-green lady's mantle and, during this period, nature's color palette broadens into deep-

er tones of pinks and purples. Late summer brings brightly colored blossoms, gray-green foliage, soft whites, and pastels. Fall deepens into rich harvest colors, leaves, fruits and vegetables, while winter leaves us with evergreens, branches, and berries. Just a few store-bought flowers can add color to these cold-season arrangements.

Tips On Conditioning

🌱 Pick flowers in early morning or evening (not in the heat of the day.) It is a good idea to bring a bucket of warm water with you into the garden in which to place stems immediately.

🌱 Bring flowers indoors and cut each stem under water. Cut stems at an angle to allow maximum water absorption. Remove foliage from stems. Tender blossoms may benefit from a dip into a product such as HydraQuick or 20 seconds in one inch of very hot water.

🌱 Place stems in tepid water for six or more hours in a cool, dark place.

🌱 Split hard and woody stems in the middle to increase water intake.

🌱 Hollow stems may be turned upside down, filled with water, and then plugged with cotton.

🌱 Flowers that bleed, such as euphorbias and poppies, need to have their stems sealed by burning them or by placing them in boiling water for 20 seconds.

🌱 After conditioning, wash buckets carefully, fill with about a cup of bleach, and the rest of the way with water.

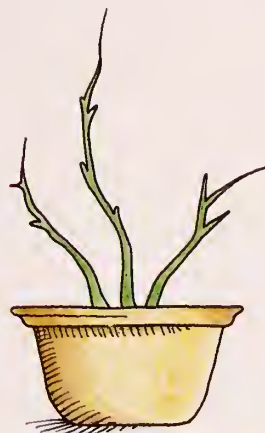
More conditioning and flower arranging tips can be found in the PHS McLean Library. For starters, try these titles:

Creative Flower Arranging by Betty Belcher (Timber Press)
Flower Arranging Styles by Judith Blacklock (Bulfinch Press)
The Art of Floral Design by Norah Hunter (Delmar Publishers, Inc.)

LET'S MAKE AN ARRANGEMENT

Let's try to make a simple arrangement. Follow these simple steps:

- 1) Cut and condition (or buy) three to five flowering branches or "line flowers."
- 2) Also get three to five "focal flowers" of different sizes, as well as three to five "filler flowers" and a few leaves.
- 3) Assemble all of your mechanics.
- 4) Cut floral foam to fit your container with 1/2 inch showing above the rim. Soak foam in water.
- 5) Now, follow diagrams 7-9.



7. Place branches so that they have actual and visual balance.



8. Place the largest focal flower at the base of the container, the second slightly above it and the smallest at the top. Allow more space between the second and third flowers to create rhythm.

Now that you've finished, ask yourself if the design pleases you? Why or why not? Then examine your arrangement, keeping in mind the guidelines of the elements and principles of design that we discussed earlier. This kind of self-critique will help make you a better arranger.

Most of all, enjoy the process of working with nature's beautiful materials. Sometimes you will love your arrangements and sometimes you won't, but there will always be more flowers to arrange and new ways to arrange them. 🌱



9. Add your leaves and filler flowers.

Jane Godshalk has certificates from Longwood Gardens in both Ornamental Plants and Floral Design, and has studied with several European floral designers, including Gregor Lersch, Henk Mulder, and Althea Higham. She is a frequent exhibitor at Philadelphia Flower Show and the Philadelphia Harvest Show, and is a Garden Club of America artistic judge. Best of all, Jane's flower-arranging business, Botanical Designs, allows her to share her passion for flowers with others.

IT'S SHOW TIME!

A Flower Show Arranger Battles for the Blue



*Story by Anne Vallery
Photographs by Harry Kalish*

One of the most exciting aspects of the Philadelphia Flower Show is the Competitive Classes, where gardeners and designers battle head-to-head in the Artistic and Horticultural divisions. In the hotly contested “Defined Space” class, flower arrangers are required

to erect a stunning arrangement in a 6 x 7 x 4 foot space...in exactly two hours. At the 2000 Show, we trailed Jim Hayden of Ambler, PA as he created his floral masterwork. Let’s go down to the Show floor and witness him in the heat of competition.

GETTING ORGANIZED

Jim Hayden has been competing at the Philadelphia Flower Show for over 20 years. The first time he entered, he won a blue ribbon and hasn't looked back since. Here on the Show floor, Jim has gathered the materials he will use to create his arrangement in the Defined Space class at the 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show. The class, "Dial in the Sun," required that the exhibitor incorporate an actual sundial into the design. Jim's goal was to make an arrangement that appeared, "natural, like it was a part of someone's garden."

To achieve that effect, he gathered materials from his garden to use along with the flowers he purchased. From his own garden, he cut branches of *Pieris japonica*, curly willow, and St. John's wort, and then bought lilies, roses, alstroemeria, and mimosa flowers.



BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

Jim goes to work covering the wooden base and Oasis floral foam with moss. He has from 7 am to 9 am to get his arrangement ready for "passing." Every entry in the Flower Show has to be passed by experts who verify that it meets the restrictions of the class, as set by the rules. This includes checking that all materials are fresh and in good condition, and that none of the mechanics show. (Mechanics can include Oasis, wire, tape or any material/hardware used to hold an arrangement together.)

During assembly, Jim tells of the time he entered a Niche class with a dried arrangement. His arrangement had been passed, but when the judges got to it a single rose petal had fallen and so it was disqualified. Harsh? Remember, this is the "big time" where everything is judged against perfection.

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CREATING THE DESIGN

Continuing with the arrangement, he winds a wild honeysuckle vine around the base. The combination of the moss and vine contributes to the natural look he's trying to achieve, while simultaneously hiding the mechanics. He puts the sundial in place and begins adding the background foliage. The design begins to take shape with curly willow for height and yellow roses "tipped" with copper to pick up the color of the sundial. Topping it off are bright yellow lilies and coppery red alstroemeria.

With limited time to complete the arrangement you might wonder if competitors do a "dry run" beforehand. Jim doesn't. Instead, he relies on experience and his eye for design.

Jim praises
the other
exhibitors for
their friendly
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and willingness
to share
and help one
another.



FRAGILE FLOWERS

The success of the arrangement depends on the conditioning of the flowers, as well as the strength of the design. Jim's arrangement has over \$200 worth of fresh flowers in it, which he conditioned right away when he got them. *[For more on conditioning, see page 9.]* He suggests putting flowers in warm water with a floral preservative as soon as you get them home from the florist.

Getting flowers to the Show in good

condition is another challenge. Transporting delicate blooms and branches requires nerves of steel and very large, heavy buckets. The day of this entry, he lost some lily blooms when someone stopped short in front of him and he had to brake suddenly. Fortunately all was not lost, as the buds were still in good shape and, with some delicate pruning, he found he could still use a few stems.



HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS

Entering the Flower Show for these many years has taught Jim a few things. First, he's learned always to come prepared. He says, "Bring anything you imagine you might need...and extras of everything else! This includes flowers and foliage, Oasis, lightbulbs for any fixtures that are part of your design, and other mechanics such as wire, florist's tape, and pins."

Jim has come to the rescue of other

exhibitors on occasion, supplying Oasis to someone whose whole arrangement collapsed just after being passed. She quickly redid the whole thing with Jim's extra Oasis and was able to be judged! Jim praises the other exhibitors for their friendly competition and willingness to share and help one another. He says they all look forward to seeing each other every year.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Despite creating a truly exquisite arrangement, Jim didn't win the blue, instead taking home a commendable third place. Although the judges commented that they didn't like the placement of the sundial, he was

pleased with the open, natural form of his design, as well as the textures and colors that reminded him of a beautiful spring garden. And as Jim noted with a quick grin, he'll definitely be back next year! 🌱

Anne Vallery is the creative services coordinator of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and a Flower Show veteran—she won a blue in the Miniature Settings Class at the 1990 Show. This is her first *Green Scene* article. Photographer Harry Kalish is a regular contributor to the magazine.

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THE Ikebana

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A Quick Guide to Japanese Flower Arranging

Story by Pamela Vu

When we think of floral arrangements, most of us think about luxurious masses of blossoms and foliage in a large container. But to the Japanese, particularly those who practice ikebana, flower arranging is not so much about "the show," but rather about the Zen experience of bringing to life a piece of nature. Instead of just dazzling us, an ikebana arrangement both stimulates the eye and brings the viewer closer to the natural world.



History & Technique

Ikebana is a form of Japanese flower arranging that began as the Chinese Buddhist tradition of placing flowers on the altar to Buddha. It was introduced to Japan in the sixth century and although once considered an art form practiced exclusively by the nobility, it has since gained popularity among people of all classes. Although no

longer considered a religious custom, the precise rules and forms of ikebana are still being taught, along with its related spiritual and philosophical principles.

Technique is important in ikebana, especially for the beginner, but in time it is the individual's creative interpretation of nature in each arrangement that is crucial. A traditional arrangement has three main branches used to symbol-

ize heaven, earth, and man, and is done in either a low (*moribana*) or tall (*nageire*) container. Depending on the school and the style, each branch in relation to the other varies in length, angle, and direction.

Today, styles can range from the traditional classical to the creative contemporary to the avant-garde, where glass, iron, and other materials may be used in place of flowers. These variations are due large-

ly to modern art concepts and Western influence in Japanese culture. In the Ohara School, for example, there are five basic styles: upright, slanting, cascade, heavenly, and contrasting. Add freestyle to that list and you can imagine the endless opportunity for creativity.

Unlike Western arrangements, ikebana stresses simplicity, line,



Left: On display at the 1996 Philadelphia Flower Show, this modern Sogetsu School arrangement uses green anthurium and bleached boxwood, along with orange cardboard and angel hair, for accessories.

Right: Hiroshi Teshigahara, headmaster of the Sogetsu School, created this astounding display of cascading madake bamboo (*Phyllostachys bambusoides*) at the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art in 1997.

Ikebana

A realistic interpretation of a spring day with purple iris and yellow-flowering kerria in bloom. Focusing on the seasonal use of plant material is characteristic of the Ohara School of Ikebana.

space, and form. "In the West, many people are drawn to a mass grouping of material in a symmetrical form," says Lorraine Toji, who has been a member of the Philadelphia Chapter of Ikebana International for the past 30 years. "In contrast, Ikebana is focused on linear composition, space, and asymmetry of



design. Although there is a certain school loyalty, nowadays with freestyle, every school can't help but be influenced by another school. It's important to note, however, that as with anything, you must know the rules before you can break them."

Living branches, mosses, grasses, as

well as withered leaves, seed pods, and buds, are valued just as highly as flowers in bloom. As for the container, it should complement the arrangement and should never detract from the flowers. In the end, the plant materials, the container, and the setting should all be in harmony and balance.

Ikebana Schools

Currently, there are more than 2,000 different schools of ikebana registered with the Japanese Ministry of Education. All, however, are rooted in the appreciation of nature's beauty—by doing ikebana, it is believed that you will be in harmony with your natural environment.

Here are the three major schools of

ikebana and their philosophies: Ikenobo, Ohara, and Sogetsu. Ikenobo, established some 500 years ago by Senkei Ikenobo, is the oldest and most traditional of all ikebana schools in Japan. Notably, it is responsible for the *rikka* and the *shoka* styles of arranging, which have been adapted by the other schools in some shape or form. The *rikka* style places flowers in a formal upright position as if pointing to the heavens. The *shoka* or *seika* style is characterized by a tight bundle of stems that form a triangular, three-branched asymmetrical structure, representing the triad of heaven, man, and earth.

Until the Ohara School came along, ikebana arrangements were done in the upright style. Unshin Ohara, founder of the Ohara School in the late 19th century, introduced the low-bowl arrange-





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Ikebana

ment called *moribana* using some of the shorter stemmed Western flowers for the first time. Taking a realistic approach, the *moribana* style strives to recreate the natural landscape, focusing on the seasonal use of branch and flower material.

Sofu Teshigahara founded the Sogetsu School in 1926. Here, the approach is to look to a fresh and vivid world, where flower arranging is done to color and

give life to our environment. Considered a modern school, its philosophy of "ikebana anywhere with anything, at any time" has made it one of the most popular schools worldwide.

Contemporary Ikebana

Contemporary schools of ikebana may also use accessories, such as fruits or vegetables and other artistic objects in addition to the floral material. The idea is that beauty is not restricted to just using flowers. While some contemporary schools seek to elicit a visceral response from viewers, others concentrate on the therapeutic aspect of flower arranging. In fact, those from the Saga Goryu School recite a Buddhist prayer before arranging flowers. This school's motto in practicing ikebana is "to unite flowers and religion."




This arrangement is done in the classical *rikka* style of the Ikenobo School. Here, the scenic elegance of nature is represented. The main branches are placed as though they are grown on a soaring peak, with plants at the foot of an autumnal mountain.

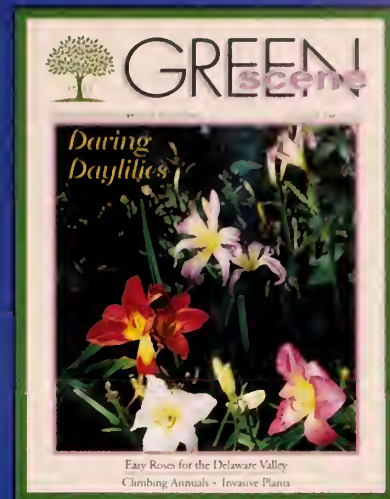
For Elaine Yuen, who attends classes at the Shambhala Center of Philadelphia, ikebana is learned and done in the context of meditation. "Like any work of art you do, once you enter into it, you become one with the what you are creating. For me, ikebana is pure relaxation and pleasure. Aside from the spiritual aspect, you also learn how to create elegant arrangements, and rather than fill space with excessive flowers you work with the 'negative' space to convey a simplicity. After studying ikebana, you'll never look at a tree, plant, or flower the same again."

Philadelphia Chapter

Not only is ikebana gaining popularity worldwide (boasting over 10,000 members in the Ikebana International society in more than 50 countries), but also here in Philadelphia. Founded in 1964, the Philadelphia Chapter of Ikebana International is made up of members from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. Ikebana exhibits can be found among the area events such as the Philadelphia Flower Show and PHS's Harvest Show, the Chester County Flower Show, and local institutions such as Longwood Gardens and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Once tied intimately to the Japanese appreciation of nature, ikebana can now be found in many American homes. More than just a beautiful flower arrangement, ikebana makes us look at nature in a more personal and meaningful manner—something that is frequently lost in our fast-paced, disconnected modern world. 

Special thanks to The Philadelphia Chapter #71 of Ikebana International for their expertise and generous donation of photographs. For more information or to become a member, call (610) 469-9646. Also visit: www1.biz.biglobe.ne.jp/~ikebana



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FINDING Flowers

Insider Tips on Locating Beautiful
Blooms for Weddings, Parties...
and Yourself!

Story by Cheryl Lee Monroe

Every florist longs for an “abundant and ever-changing selection of extraordinary flowers with which to work,” notes Tom Pritchard, author of the acclaimed insider’s guide, *Madderlake’s Trade Secrets*. Extraordinary flowers, of course, means no mums, no carnations, and no baker’s fern—it means flowers with *pizzazz*! Today, our global economy can deliver selections of amazing flowers to our doorsteps in a day or two. But if you’re not a pro, where do you find all these wonders? Read on for the inside scoop.

OUT OF SEASON

Back in the 1980s, I remember cleaning boxes full of beautiful tulips...in November. They arrived in every color of the spectrum and we mixed oranges with purples for Thanksgiving, and replaced carnations with red, pink, and white tulips come December. They spruced up our palate and we used thousands of them for weddings, parties, and every possible order. Tulips were not the first flowers available out of season but they were one of the first used in large quantities. The range of colors and their price made them

perfect substitutes for carnations, plus we were very thirsty for a new look.

At the time, tulips and most of our other cut flowers—either in season or out—arrived from Holland, though Colombia was hot on their heels in terms of flower exports. Today, that South American nation is the biggest flower exporter on the planet with Holland now running third behind Ecuador. South America has great geographic advantages for producing cut flowers and, indeed they grow many flowers 365 days of the year. Just about any time of

year, you can get bigleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) which have inflorescences bigger than our gardens will provide. Plus they come in every color from blue to purple to red and every hue in between. They last an amazing 3-4 weeks in a vase.

I paid a visit to Kester Wholesale Floral Co. in Landover, Maryland in February to check out what is available to florists. You can find different flowers yourself by asking your local florist to check on what is interesting or unusual at the wholesalers in any particular week.

Rob Cordillo



Fresh-picked *Hydrangea macrophylla*

FINDING Flowers

Remember, always ask for the price before you order something special. Prices will vary depending on the time of the year and where the bunch comes from. The hydrangea, for example, can cost you between \$5 and \$10 a stem and possibly more.

A flower lover in a wholesaler's cooler is akin to a kid in a candy shop. At Kester's, for example, I found deep-violet phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)—this is a color I could not easily find to plant in my garden. There were also sunflowers with huge faces from South America, and a beautiful indigo-blue veronica from Holland. There was broom (*Cytisus* sp.) in white and yellow, hailed from Italy; white lilac from Holland; and deep blue gentian (*Gentiana* sp.) from New Zealand. I found, too, what one might consider the staples: delphinium, orchids from Thailand, Hawaiian protea, and even plain old dock, our summer-blooming roadside dock (*Rumex* sp.). All of this . . . in February!

Roses are #1 in sales at Kester's and they represent about 40% of inventory. Florists are unanimous in their current excitement over the new colors of roses coming on the market. The "rose baby boom" was how one article termed the emergence of so many new varieties. There are at least 120 rose varieties commercially available today.

Jamie Rothstein, the florist who decked out the entrance to the 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show with lavish flower arrangements, raved over the newest roses she'd recently found, one a black-red color with loose petals and the other a brown-orange perfect for fall parties.

FARM FRESH

A new flower grower is emerging in our country. Rose growers in America are succumbing to the pressures of South America, as did our carnation and mum growers of the past. Imports from Israel,

Korea, South America, and New Zealand are dazzling us, along with the prices they command. Enter Specialty Cut Flower Growers, a network of independent local growers and farmers who produce annuals, perennials, bulbs, and woody plants for cut flowers. The advantages to being their customers are these: there is only a short time from field to vase; there's more of an unusual selection; and you can find a more natural-looking flower.

The best place to find these growers is at farmers' markets or the equivalent in your area. The flowers are usually cut the same day they go to market, are not forced, but field grown and, in their natural season, are luscious. You'll need only to re-cut the stems, drop them in a vase and serve with your barbecue. Add a preservative, if possible.

My favorite part is that the flowers

look as if I'd cut them from my garden; no stem is uniform. Top-quality bunches in the flower industry mean all the stems are perfectly uniform. However there is a definite need and place for the look of a more naturally growing flower in our designs. Specialty Cut Flower Growers have only touched the tip of the iceberg on what they can harvest and put in a vase.

GOING TO THE CHAPEL

Flowers are most relevant for special occasions, weddings in particular. Flowers reflect the spirit of the bride and stay long in the memories of the day. "The point," says Jamie Rothstein on the subject of brides and wedding flowers, "is that you want to be beautiful and flowers are like insurance. You can enhance every choice, from location to linens, with your flowers."



Walter Chandoha

How do you get the perfect flowers for your wedding? First, find a florist, an expert who can help turn your vision into flowers. Ellie Cox of Floral Events in Silver Spring, MD tells us, "The most important aspect of wedding flowers is the bride's vision of the day. It is not about the designer...it's about the bride's individual ideas. Your florist should be your translator; choose someone who can help make your day stunning."

Today's wedding bouquets have a European flavor and are often hand-tied. *Elegance* is the operative word. Bruce Robertson of Robertson's in Chestnut Hill, PA, compares it to Dutch bouquets, where flowers are gathered and tied with bands. The stems can be left showing for a just-picked look, or wrapped with ribbon. The whole look is cleaner, sophisticated, and ever-so classic. Rothstein adds, "It will be classically beautiful even in 20 years when the photographs get hauled out for an anniversary."

Brides are also choosing color over all-white arrangements. "Nine out of 10 bouquets at Kremp Florist in Willow Grove, PA, have color," says Mary Lou Grasso. At Kremp's, the blush tones, light blues, and lavender are very popular. Magazines show lots of color, too. If you look at the bouquets in the book *Weddings* by Martha Stewart, she mixes deep rich colors with unusual foliage in order to capture the look of the paintings of Dutch "Old Masters."

Designers, overall, agree that the season dictates the colors and, moreover, seasonal flowers are still the #1 favorite of brides. Forced flowers are beguiling, but the vibrancy of flowers blooming in the right season perfectly matches the bride's vibrancy. The freshness of lilacs and delphiniums for May, peonies and roses for June, the wildflower look of summer, hydrangeas and berries for fall, and the jewel tones of winter are often what work best.

Juggling expenses is always part of planning a wedding and there are ways to use your resources well. Jamie Rothstein suggests using potted flowers in the church or at the wedding site: azaleas for spring, impatiens for summer, and mums for fall. Church pews or structures can be decorated with greens and ribbons, adding flowers as the budget allows. Bruce Robertson suggests hand-tied bouquets of only a few stems for the wedding party. Select an elegant flower like calla lilies for the most impact.

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\$15 billion dollars. 1.2 billion roses. These are floral industry dollars that are big enough to make lots of folks take a fresh look at how we buy flowers. Enter "dot.com" and a new kind of accessibility. Buying flowers on the Internet has great advantages and a few challenges, too. See the selection below for surfing potential. Flowers arrive fresh from the farm in most cases, and you can't negate the money you can save.

"The best package a person can buy these days is a plain box of cut flowers," says Bruce Robertson, regardless of where you buy it. "The price online is reasonable because you removed the labor involved, but you'll have to arrange them, because you've also removed the designer."

The challenge for folks new to fresh-cut flowers is, you must condition the Internet-ordered flowers. And don't forget the vase—you'll need one at home, so if you haven't a ready supply, order one that will be shipped concurrently. Conditioning is not rocket science and directions are enclosed or, you can print them off the website. If you've never done this before, you'll need to read them. Poorly conditioned flowers mean you'll throw \$50-\$100 down the drain, particularly with roses which have

droopy heads until they get a big drink. Try www.rosesinc.org for an incredible amount of information on caring for your roses.

The best part about buying flowers online is they are likely to come directly from the grower. The product is very fresh and the extra work you'll put into arranging will earn you more mileage on your dining room table. Shop around because prices vary widely. Two dozen roses, for example, can range from \$50-\$115, depending on the time of the year. (That's unarranged and *without* the vase.) On the other hand, flower shop prices, if arranged and in a vase, can be \$100-\$175 for two dozen roses. That's something to think about next time you're surfing for flowers on the Internet. ☐

Cheryl Lee Monroe is a longtime *Green Scene* author and professional horticulturist whose special love is cut flowers. She gardens in Myersville, MD.

WEB SOURCES FOR CUT FLOWERS

- www.proflowers.com
- www.ftd.com
- www.1-800-flowers.com
- www.marthasflowers.com
- www.calyxandcorolla.com
- www.greatflowers.com
- www.exquisite-flowers.com
- For more on Maryland markets:
www.mda.state.md.us
- USDA listing of farmer's markets:
www.ams.usda.gov



the

WINTER

arranger

Be Inspired by One Expert's Off-Season Creations



*Story by Joanna Reed
Photographs by Harry Kalish*

Flowers and especially bouquets are important in my home. They provide an unspoken welcome and cheer for the drop-in visitor, invited guest, and even for me. Above all, they bring my garden inside, where these gathered bits and pieces of nature can be leisurely savored at any season. Using a style I call “Stick and Stuff,” I put arrangements together all year long, even in winter when there’s a foot of snow on the ground.



The WINTER Arranger

LESSONS FROM NATURE

Before becoming a gardener, I spent hours gleaning sparse bouquets from the well-tended countryside. What I called “flowers” my neighbors, most of whom were farmers, considered unwelcome weeds. Back then, fields were cultivated assiduously, while hedgerows and road banks were kept clean with a scythe wielded several times a season. Few flowers were left to be seen or picked. But those that were left, such as the occasional ditch daisy, clover blossom, or Queen Anne’s Lace, became more visible to me as I passed by. These I would pick, put in a vase at home, and fill out with sprigs of green from a juniper. It is from these experiences of my youth that my “Stick and Stuff” method was born.

One lesson I’ve learned over the years is that need is the world’s best teacher. One summer was sufficient for me to learn that if I wanted bouquets, I had better plant something to cut. Along with perennials and annuals, I planted every sort of promising evergreen shrub or tree. Many died, either trampled by two- or four-legged creatures, eaten by rabbit or sheep, or wrongly sited, ecologically. I consoled myself that at least an equal number of plants lived, though I shy away from any official tally. The survivors enable me to cut an interesting mixture of evergreens throughout the winter. During the remainder of the year, I cut both deciduous and evergreen or ever-gray foliage for my arrangements.

When the summer’s abundance of fragrant and colorful blossoms become a memory, the contrasting form, texture and color of sturdy foliage is all-important for making late fall and winter

arrangements. Favorites are wood spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides* var. *robbiae*), lily-of-the-valley bush (*Pieris japonica*), Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*), box (*Buxus* sp.), yew (*Taxus* sp.), drooping leucothoe (*Leucothoe fontanesiana* syn. *L. catesbaei*), and all the hellebores (*Helleborus foetidus*, *H. atrorubens*, *H. niger*, and *H. orientalis*). The juxtaposition of green, purple and bronze hues—and a variety of solid, feathery, oblong, round or sword-shaped leaves—create interest which bears even the closest inspection.

As most of these are woody plants, the twiggy stems supply ample support in the vase. With the basic arrangements secure, these bouquets can be augmented with rosy or golden fruit from hawthorns, crabapples, ornamental fruiting shrubs or wildlings like winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*, also commonly known as black alder). You can also choose from branches of dried leaves such as beech or oak, flowers air-dried during the summer past, or seed heads which have obligingly dried on the plant such as sweet-pepper bush (*Clethra alnifolia*), money plant (*Lunaria annua*), teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*) and the various Japanese and Siberian irises, hydrangeas and astilbes.

ARRANGING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

At Christmas, when time is most precious, a collection of interesting and varied greens can be most helpful. Using the aforementioned hollies, plus any pine branches and its cones, can give my arrangements a more seasonal look. The white-fruited form of swamp holly or inkberry (*Ilex glabra* 'Ivory Queen') looks



Facing page top: With a large palette of woody plants to choose from, Joanna clips branches freely.

Facing page bottom: She returns from "the hunt" with an armful of greens.

Above: With the greens spread across the countertop in her kitchen, Joanna strips away extra leaves from a sprig of stinking hellebore (*Helleborus foetidus*).

The WINTER Arranger



much like mistletoe. Pods, cones, and twiggy branches can also be sprayed with silver gilt, white or any color of one's choice for added pizzazz. In my home, though, the natural look is preferable.

As the New Year begins, if the hungry bird population has not yet stripped and devoured every showy berry from tree and shrub, I continue to brighten the dull gray days of January and February by adding winterberry and graceful panicles of red fruit from *idesia* (*Idesia polycarpa*). The brilliant purple of beautyberry's (*Callicarpa dichotoma*) clustered fruits, as well as the miniature berry clusters of common privet (*Ligustrum* sp.) and the English ivy fruits—both blue—add an extra dimension.

When the birds have left my winter cupboard bare (which they often do), I overcome this paucity of punch with foliage from variegated euonymous, yucca, or false cypress (*Chamaecyparis* sp.). To cheer visitors as the long winter drags on (but mostly for myself), I substitute fresh or silk flowers for the aging berries and pods. A handful of either can brighten quite a few rooms, if used in conjunction with the hardy foliage from outdoors.

Fruit can also be used in these winter arrangements. Bowls or trays of ripening apples, pears, tangerines, or grapes seem more festive when highlighted with foliage from lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia* or *L. x intermedia*), holly (*Ilex glabra*, *I. opaca*, or *I. aquifolium*), or English ivy (*Hedera helix*). Snippets poked between the pieces of fruit will remain fresh looking for almost a week or until the fruits are ripe enough to be edible. A few candles will add height and sparkle.



WAITING FOR SPRING

When the earliest bunches of snowdrops (*Galanthus* sp.) are combined with fragrant sweet box (*Sarcococca* sp.) in tiny vases, I indulge myself with expectant thoughts of spring and the eventuality of full-blown summer. I anticipate the endless abundance and range of color that spring and summer flowers will assuredly provide. Also a treat for my arrangements, the wealth of deciduous foliage in myriad shades of fresh green that will also be available.

Still creating arrangements as winter winds down, I combine these "new kids on the block" with my faithful, long-lasting standbys of diverse evergreens. To me, they are a gift of time. Until spring finally shows up, they remain the foundation of my bouquets. Refreshing a few vases daily also avoids the possibility of turning a delicious pleasure into an onerous chore.

When a great occasion dawns, such as a special party or mammoth celebration, cut buckets and buckets of flowers, fruits, berries or pods, depending on the season. Cut plenty of mixed foliage, too, allowing sufficient time to adequately harden them all off for long keeping. By using the twiggy armature of woody stems and abundant evergreen leaves to support fragile stems and blossoms, you avoid the inevitable stress of missing pin holders or buying extra Oasis. You can simply rejoice at the ease, speed and joy of "Sticking and Stuffing"—so much so it will soon become second nature. 🐝

One of the most respected gardeners in the Delaware Valley, Joanna Reed is also well known for Longview Farm, her fine garden in Malvern, PA. She has been a contributor to *Green Scene* for nearly 28 years, appearing first on the cover of our November 1972 issue.

Facing page top: Deciding on a pleasing combination of plants, she begins constructing her arrangement in a tall decorative pot.

Facing page bottom: The arranger and her finished "Stick and Stuff" masterpiece—a striking combination of leucothoe, dried beech leaves (*Fagus sylvatica*), dried money plant (*Lunaria annua*), swamp holly (*Ilex glabra*), cryptomeria, and pieris (*Pieris japonica*).

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The Cutting Edge

Planning and Planting Your Own Cutting Garden

Story by Lorraine Kiefer

A cutting garden can be a plot of colorful rows, a bed tucked in an intimate setting, or even a barrel or pot on a deck. It is the garden where you cut annual blooms to bring indoors, or the place where you grow bulbs to enjoy in the garden as well as in a vase. It is a bed where perennials tumble about, caressing each other with color all summer long, while flowering shrubs yield fragrant and colorful boughs to cut. Have you planted your cutting garden yet?

Photos courtesy of René's Garden

A bouquet of just-picked larkspur.



PLANNING AND DIGGING

First, get ready to plan and then to plant. List flowers you love, those that you have grown well, and those you want to grow. Look choices up in seed catalogs, read about them in garden books, and surf the Internet. But most important, ask other gardeners if they have ever planted these flowers in your area. Also, jot down notes about the soil and light preferences of plants you want to grow, and you're on your way.

Now, look outdoors. Pick a place, plan a plot, and prepare the soil well. If there is sod it can be cut, removed, and dropped in the compost pile. Have your soil tested if this has not been done in a while (contact your county extension office for information about soil testing). Depending on the results, add limestone and other required nutrients to the garden. Turn or till the soil and rake only when dry. Remember, the more organic materials in your bed, the better flowers will grow in it.

PLANTING

When planting, I place my tallest plants on the north side of my huge kitchen garden, so they don't cast a shadow on smaller plants. Many seeds—like zinnias, nasturtiums, marigolds, and cosmos—can be planted up to July 4th. Check the seed packet to see how many days until bloom time. It is always important to keep newly planted seeds moist, especially with summer planting. Successive planting yields a constant, youthful supply of flowers to cut.

Our kitchen garden is one of our best cutting gardens. Here we have great perennials on both sides of the fence. The pungent lavenders, silver foliage herbs, and other aromatic plants on the outside actually deter rabbits from trying to go under or over the fence. Perennials planted here are also out of the way of tillers, weedwackers, and lawnmowers. Inside are the classic rows of annuals, often mixed right in with the vegetables.

But don't feel that you must always devote a plot or square of your yard to just being "a cutting garden." More than 34 years ago, my husband and I planned our landscape to produce a year-round supply of annuals, perennials, and flowering shrubs and trees. Over that time, I've observed that one of the nicest small spring-flowering trees to have in the yard is the swamp magnolia or sweet bay (*Magnolia virginiana*), which gives me hundreds of sweetly fragrant blooms from late May until July. These last only a day, but add such fragrance to a bouquet it is worth picking a bud daily. The lilac tree (*Syringa* sp.) is also fragrant, exquisite, and dramatic. Having big bouquets of lilacs everywhere in the house is wonderful for that old-fashioned look and fragrance. Roses are gorgeous, too, and a fragrant mainstay of the cutting garden.

An area of our landscape planted with perennials has a large stand of early hardy orchids (*Bletilla* sp.). These are long lasting when cut and can be used in creative and unique ways. Other useful

perennials to cut include asters, daisies, monardas, campanulas, coneflowers, lavenders, yarrows, mallows, and asclepias—all of which flower profusely during the summer. Many will continue until late fall if picked often, watered well, and fed with a balanced fertilizer. Gathering blooms of perennial black-eyed Susan, salvia, scabiosa, veronica, and many other perennials also encourages more blooms.

The annuals that march round and round your pool or along the driveway will also bloom better when cut often. To my eyes, those delicate annual and biennial poppies that nod and bob in spring breezes are *oh-so* pretty in a clear vase. I was surprised at how long they had lasted after being cut and placed in water—what is more beautiful than poppies in bloom? They look like chiffon skirts billowing in the wind. Poppies can be tricky to grow, so I toss the seeds on the ground in full sun a couple times a year and then let Mother Nature do the rest. They now re-seed year after year. This

Purple bee balm is great for cutting.





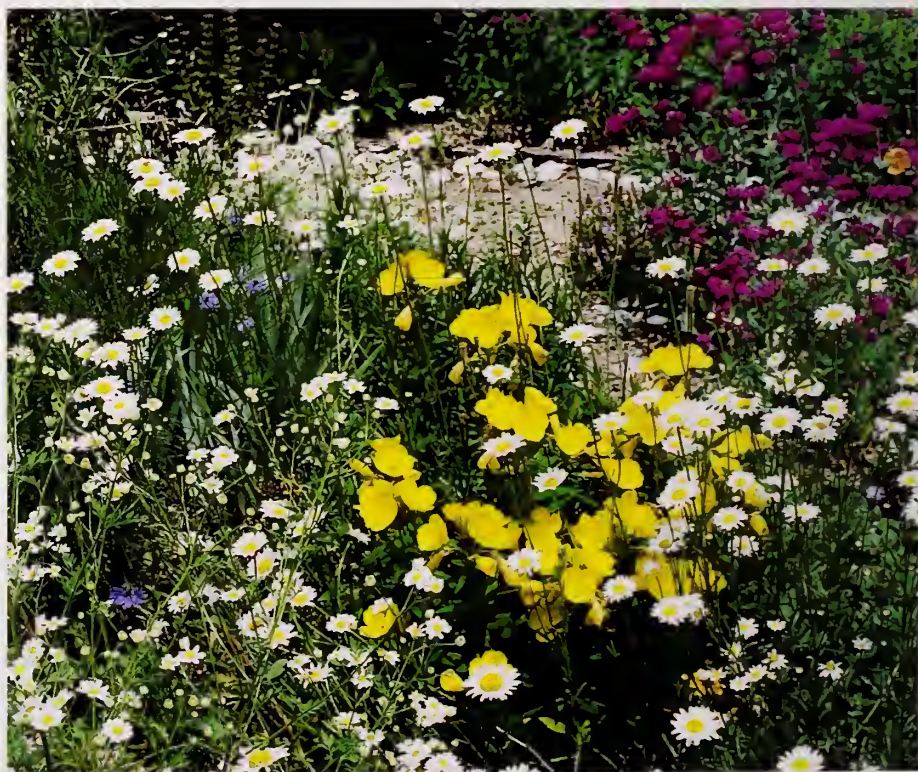
Cosmos, zinnia and feverfew sitting on porch swing.

same process goes for larkspur or cornflowers, whose seeds I scatter with the poppies. Keep in mind that all these seeds need a cool period in which to germinate and bloom.

GET INTO A ROUTINE

Garden flowers should be picked without a second thought. Get in the habit of gathering a few blossoms daily and condition them for display [see sidebar on page 9]. Display a bud in a vase on your nightstand, a small bouquet where you eat, a few blooms near a door, or on the porch as a greeting bouquet. I find that people's spirits are uplifted when they are in a room with flowers, too.

If you have a powder room, get in the habit of always having a seasonal posy sitting on the counter or sink. I have several small containers that I use for the kitchen table, where we take most of our meals. These might contain a sprig of evergreen with berries in the winter, or a few snowdrops, forsythia or daffodils



A garden of white daisies and yellow poppies.

early in spring. Then starts a constantly changing bouquet of lilies-of-the-valley, lilacs, tulips, violets, geraniums, zinnias, marigolds, cosmos, calendulas, salvias, mums, grasses, and various field flowers. This practice also makes an impression on children. For more than 30 years, a garden offering has graced our kitchen table. Now I notice that my sons also do the same in their own homes.

Flowers are a renewable crop and, when you plant a cutting garden, they are enjoyed three times over. First when you plant them, again when you pick them, and finally when you arrange them in your home. Also give flowers to a friend or loved one to spread a happy feeling. Remember: the hand that gathers and gives flowers always retains a pleasant fragrance...and a memory.

A *Green Scene* contributor for 22 years, Lorraine Kiefer is the proprietor of Triple Oaks Nursery & Herb Garden, located at 2359 Delsea Drive, Franklinville, NJ 08322, (856) 694-4272, www.tripleoaks.com.



Zinnia and castor bean in the garden.

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Rob Cardillo

TIPS FOR DRYING FLOWERS

When cutting any plant or flower you want to dry, it is important to note how close it is to blossoming. For example, when cutting goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.), you should do so when the buds are just starting to show color. After it is cut, it will continue to open as it dries. If you cut the flowers when they are fully open, the flowers will shed soon after drying.

Cut flowers toward the end of the day when plants are the most dehydrated, as this will reduce drying time considerably. You should also know that the quicker they dry, the better the longevity and quality of the flowers. Therefore, don't try to dry flowers in a damp basement. Hang the flowers upside down in a cool, dark, dry, well-ventilated area. If you plan to make mixed bouquets, wreaths, and swags, make them before you dry the flowers. This will decrease breakage and will give greater latitude in designing. Adjustments can also be made while the designs are drying. Wreaths and swags can be dried lying flat or hung in place. These methods of drying yield perfect results every time, creating lovely dried flowers for your tabletop arrangements.

Finally, a quick note about drying hydrangeas. When making dry hydrangea wreaths, work with the flowers when they are first picked. Pick them when they are stiff and spring back to the touch, usually in August in our area. When they are cut too early, they will become limp and floppy. If you are not sure whether they are ready, cut one stem and lay it out overnight. If it droops, wait several weeks longer before harvesting.

—Eva Monheim

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BACKYARD

Flowers for the Spirit

By Marban M. Sparkman

The custom of placing formal flowers on a church altar is not an old one. Although its exact origin is unknown, around 200 years ago, a group of talented women began experimenting with flowers in many non-denominational chapels, as well as on the imposing high altar at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. With a preference for seasonal materials, they raided their own summer gardens, experimented with

for success. The result—a mass arrangement or a single perfect blossom—brings a bit of the garden indoors to brighten and perfume the space. On the other hand, a church offers special challenges. Indeed, vast spaces can be daunting.

The function of flowers on the altar is to enhance the cross that stands on or above it. A single-centered arrangement provides a background for the cross, in lieu of the more traditional placement

A person sitting in the furthest pew should be able to enjoy the flowers. Exaggerated lines and clear bright colors or masses of a single color help an arrangement to stand out at a distance. Yellow mums tucked deep into an “all white” arrangement will be unseen, yet give the illusion of sunshine. Touches of red make the orange and russet colors of fall glow. Strongly contrasting colors such as red and white tend to give the effect of measles from far away. The cure is to clump together several stems of one color, called *zoning*, and to add a transitional color or some variegated material. Avoid blue flowers that appear as “holes” from a distance.

At the Washington National Cathedral, members of its Flower Guild continue to experiment with new designs and techniques as they prepare for the weddings, state funerals, religious festivals, and national holidays that are celebrated there. Visitors to the 1999 Philadelphia Flower Show were also enchanted by the floral

artistry exhibited by the Guild in their simulated stone replica of the Cathedral. All were entranced by its sublime majesty, not only of the architecture, but also for the compelling flower arrangements within.

The author recently completed the Flower Seminar at the Washington National Cathedral and is a member of the Flower Guild of the Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr.



Simple greens can make an elegant statement. Looped, stripped palms and branches of wax flower highlight trimmed and shaped fan palms.

newly discovered exotic flowers, and combined fruits and vegetables into their arrangements. Their floral skills added a welcoming dimension to the grandeur of the vast Gothic cathedral.

Designing flowers for church is not unlike arranging for your own home. Proper conditioning of materials, sturdy mechanics, suitable containers, harmonious colors, good design, and appropriate scale are the common underpinnings

on either side. Arranged in modern, low brass boxes, placed behind or immediately adjacent to the cross, the design highlights that central feature. The same low boxes form the framework for a garland of flowers and greens along the back of the altar. At the base of the altar, three or four varieties of flowers are placed in a linear pattern as they might grow in a border. The pattern is then repeated several times to strengthen the design.

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Cathedral Village recently opened The William H. Sayre Horticultural Center, a greenhouse and headhouse where residents can continue to enjoy their horticultural pursuits in our premier retirement community.

Our full time Director and Horticulturist has planned a year-round program of events for Garden Club members with classes and workshops that will be of interest to both experienced and novice gardeners.

Resident Garden Club members, who will pay a nominal membership fee, will have the opportunity to attend classes and seminars given by our Director as well as by other prominent Philadelphia horticulturists. National and international plant experts will also be invited to give seminars when visiting Philadelphia.

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The lifestyle of Cathedral Village encourages this Philadelphia tradition that continues to grow.

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Contents

- 6** The Potting Shed
- 10** Renny's World
Visitors to the Philadelphia Flower Show are often wowed by the daring exhibits by designer/arranger Renny Reynolds. Here, Patricia McLaughlin introduces us to the man himself and leads us into his unique business of "rented perennials."
- 16** Principles of Design
Beverly Fitts teaches us the concepts of *accents* and *grace notes*, which can be used to place ornaments in the garden. Better yet, these principles can be applied to any design situation, helping you create beauty out of chaos.
- 22** Yellow Fever
Dr. Tomasz Aniśko writes about three new plant introductions from Longwood Gardens, all of which come in striking shades of yellow.



- 28** A Photographic Memory
Barbara Bruno contributed to *Green Scene* in many ways over the years, working as a photographer, writer, and illustrator. Barbara died last year, but in celebration of her talents, here is a photo essay containing some of her most memorable images. Also included is a moving tribute by friend and writer, Lorraine Kiefer.

- 34** The Natives are Restless
Dorothy Wright and Bill Lamack uncover seven native plants that not only are beautiful, but flourish in our region with very little attention. Also included are sources for these great growers.

- 38** Classified Ads
- 40** Backyard
A Gardener triumphs at the Philadelphia Harvest Show

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society motivates people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

Cover Photo of a garden at Whickham Place Farm
in Essex, England by Beverly Fitts

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Letter From the Editor



I live and work in a world of sophisticated gardeners. We speak the language of gardening in botanical terms; we admire each other's rare and wonderful plants; and we visit all the finest gardens we can, both here in the Delaware Valley and abroad. But what about the lowly zinnia? Where does this pedestrian plant fit into our gardening universe?

Actually, it fits into my garden just fine. The zinnia and a host of other seemingly

August, will last well into fall or even into milder Novembers. In the retail vernacular, that's known as "bang for the buck."

And then there's the mundane marigold, a plant so common that it barely registers on some people's radar. But like zinnias, there are dozens of different colors and shapes to choose from, be it the deep gold of 'Queen Sophia', the yellow of 'First Lady Hybrid', or the creamy white of 'French Vanilla' (as well as electrifying combinations of all three). They bloom defiantly during even the hottest months and stay on through fall. My kids love to collect the interesting seed pods they produce and, I must admit, I even like their weird, pungent aroma. Yet they are regarded by some as the lowest of the low in the flower kingdom.

There are other "wrong-side-of-the-track" plants that are similarly disparaged: nasturtiums, annual geraniums (*Pelargonium* sp.), cleome, dracaena spikes, and Shasta daisies, among them. It's really just a question of fashion, though. Until a year or two

ago, the coleus was thought to be a very trite floral concoction. Today, it's just about the hottest annual on the planet—today's gardeners can't seem to get enough of their wildly variegated leaves, which now come in a dizzying array of patterns. And all because of the vagaries of gardening taste and whim.

So what should you do about this horticultural class war? My advice is to simply wait until *after* your garden club comes for its annual visit next spring...and then sneak a perfectly vulgar verbena or ghastly gazania into your border. No will be any the wiser and you will reap the benefit of a charming plant that will bloom with the best of them in our hot and humid region. Go ahead—I promise not to tell anyone.

So what should you do about this horticultural class war? My advice is to simply wait until *after* your garden club comes for its annual visit next spring...and then sneak a perfectly vulgar verbena or ghastly gazania into your border. No will be any the wiser and you will reap the benefit of a charming plant that will bloom with the best of them in our hot and humid region. Go ahead—I promise not to tell anyone.

Pete Prown

greenscene@pennhort.org

Zinnias...or Bust

"ordinary" flowers are regular visitors to my beds and I don't think I'd have it any other way. I can't imagine having a late-summer border without the huge, glowing blossoms of 'Cut and Come Again' zinnias blooming their proverbial heads off. I don't care how gauche they are—for me, it's zinnias or bust. And since we're playing true confessions, you should also know that I have been known to plant marigolds, petunias, and impatiens, too. While some people wouldn't admit to growing these low-brow lovelies in their garden, mine wouldn't be complete without them.

You'd be surprised how charming these everyday annuals and perennials can be if planted alongside more exotic specimens. If used judiciously, many of these flowers can be perfect for the Mid-Atlantic garden. For example, if you have an area of pervasive shade on your property, what could be better than a pot of bright impatiens. They bloom profusely, don't fuss much and, if cut back in

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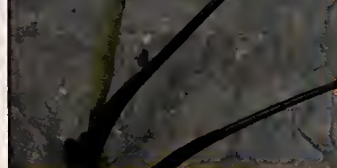
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Photos by Pete Prown



Lily in front of the "Tree of Life" wall mosaic.

The Village That Lily Built

by Pamela Vu

only half of the story, however. The Village also offers workshops in dance, theater and art, after-school programs, and job training.

"Here, we don't do art for art's sake; we do art to survive," she says. "We need to do this so that our children don't get lost on the street and get in trouble. But more important, it's about getting people involved in bettering their lives and getting in touch with their

connections with the kids and others in building the Village," asserts Lily. Souls like Big Man, a 6-foot/8-inch former drug addict who is the artisan behind the many mosaics designed by Lily, as well as the late "JoJo" Williams, who volunteered to organize the children in the neighborhood to clear vacant lots. Clearly, there is a real sense of community at the Village. (To see more of Big Man's artwork, you can visit PHS headquarters at 20th and Arch Streets, where several of his large wall mosaics are on display.)

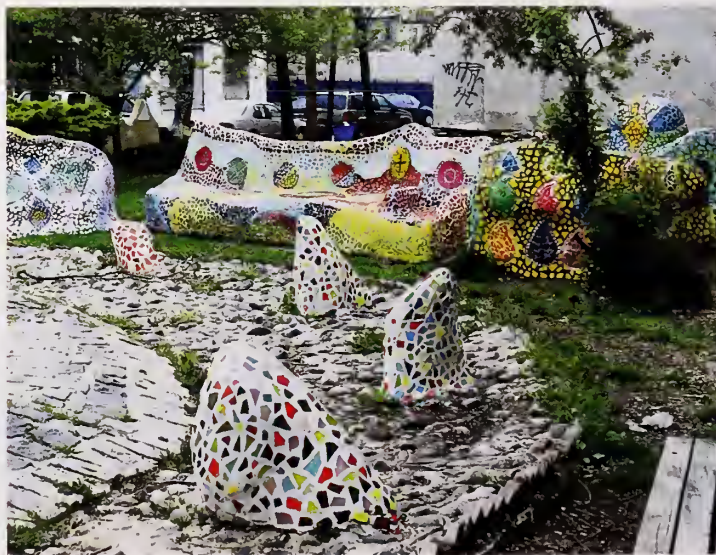
As we head back through a narrow passageway adorned with life-size mosaic angels on both sides, it dawned on me that the art and gardening in the Village represent a rite of passage for its residents—a path traveled to greater self-confidence and self-betterment. And if it can happen here, amidst the turmoil of North Philadelphia, it can happen anywhere.

Wrapped in her African-patterned shawl on a cool spring morning, Lily Yeh leads me on a tour through the Village of Arts and Humanities, an oasis of culture and gardening in North Philadelphia. In this neighborhood around tiny Alder Street, it's easy to see the wounds of urban decay—the hollow shells of buildings and vacant lots. But notes Lily, "Unlike some, we see these obstacles as opportunities to create art and beauty, as well as instill self-confidence and help rebuild the community." This is the magic of her Village.

Through partnerships with Philadelphia Green (PHS's urban greening program) and other organizations and individuals, Lily's plans for the "Village" helped launch a true renaissance for this community. The many gardens and parks in the Village—which include mosaic-studded sculptures, organic vegetable beds, a tree farm, and a Magical Garden where children help out—tell

inner strengths."

Although her title is executive director, Lily is quick to point out that the Village is hardly a one-woman show. "Along with the staff, there are special souls in this community who have made real



At the Village's Ile lfe Garden, concrete has been poured over old outdoor furniture to create artistic benches.



Swiss Chard

by Debbie Moran

Although chard is not seriously bothered by pests or disease, tunneling leaf miners may disfigure some leaves. Young plants can be protected with floating row covers. I simply cut off and discard damaged leaves, and the chard quickly recovers.

Swiss chard can be used raw in salads or lightly cooked. I enjoy it boiled

Looking for an easy and tasty vegetable for late-summer planting? Consider Swiss chard. A member of the beet family, chard (*Beta vulgaris*) is grown for its crinkled leaves, which have a mild, sweet flavor and are rich in vitamins. Swiss chard is also an attractive plant, with striking, dark-green leaves and white or red stems.

What makes Swiss chard "Swiss," however, is a bit of a mystery. The wild beet is a Mediterranean plant, originating in the coastal areas of southern Europe and northern Africa. One source suggests that Roman armies found it while invading Greece and brought it north to feed their horses. There, it became an excellent food crop for the cooler climates of northern Europe, hence its "Swiss" designation.

Chard is very easy to grow. It tolerates a wide range of weather conditions and can be sown in spring or summer. Directly seed it in moderately fertile, well-drained soil in a sunny location. Plants grow quickly, and most varieties mature in 50 to 60 days. Succulent, young leaves are ready for thinning (and eating) in as little as 30 days. For a late-season crop, sow seeds in early- to mid-August and begin enjoying chard in September.

until tender and topped with butter, salt, and pepper. Chard is also delicious sautéed in olive oil and garlic until slightly wilted. It makes an excellent spinach substitute in many recipes and is often used in Greek and Italian cuisine.

Beyond chard, there are several other vegetables suitable for late-summer planting, such as lettuce, spinach, kale, and collards; the latter two can be harvested until early winter. Terry Allan, vegetable trials manager at Johnny's Selected Seeds, notes, "I love spending cool summer mornings planting crops like Swiss chard for fall harvest. It's much more fun than weeding and renews the empty areas left after the spring crops have finished."

Debbie Moran is a freelance writer who lives in New York state.

SOURCES

- Johnny's Selected Seeds, (207) 437-4301, www.johnnyseeds.com
- Burpee Seeds, (800) 888-1447, www.burpee.com

GARDEN NET

PLANT WINNERS. Attention herb lovers: the **2000 Herb of the Year** is rosemary, as selected by the International Herb Association and the Herb Society of America. Native to dry hillsides around the Mediterranean, most rosemary species are not cold hardy (generally growing best in Zones 8-10), but make excellent summer plants that can be easily potted up and overwintered on a sunny windowsill. In the home and kitchen, rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) can be used in numerous ways, from a garnish for lamb and savory stews to an aromatic base for teas, oils, and soaps. According to folklore, it's also said to improve memory and ward off evil.

In other award news, the Garden Club of America has given its **2000 Freeman Medal** to the bald cypress tree (*Taxodium distichum*). Hardy in Zones 3-9, the bald cypress is best known for its coppery fall foliage and the "cypress knees" that protrude up from water when it's sited in a swamp or pond.



A THERAPEUTIC GARDEN. Gardening is great therapy for everyone, but is often difficult for those who are wheelchair bound or have disabilities. To help make gardening accessible to all, however, is the new **Cellugro Therapy Garden**. The system includes a movable growing box with up to 52 individual plant cells inside. Gardeners can put their favorite plants in a cell and water

continued

Fall Lawn Tips for the Delaware Valley

Homeowners generally think of spring as the ideal time to perk up their lawns, but in recent years, experts have begun recommending late-summer and fall as great times to re-seed grassy areas and even prevent weeds. This is primarily because the cool temperatures and wetter weather during this period encourage grass to germinate and set roots before the cold of winter hits. Adds Richard Martinez, vice president of R&D for the Scotts Company, "Dollar for dollar, you can improve your lawn more in fall than at any other time of the year."

Here are some quick tips for your autumnal lawn adventures:

- **Early Fall:** Look for patches of lawn that were dried or thinned out by summer heat. Either rake up or aerate the soil to improve drainage, and then evenly spread a premium seed mix. Try to avoid "cheapo" seed packages that may contain weeds. (Also make sure to

plant the appropriate seed mixes for sunny or shady spots.) Fertilize on the same day and keep the area moist until the grass is well established.

- **Late Fall:** If you're trying to maintain better color into the cold months, consider a "winter fertilizer" to strengthen roots for the long winter haul. It can also help the lawn get off to a quicker start in spring. Improving the lawn in the fall can further work to prevent "salt damage" caused by salty run-off from winter-snow plowing on many streets, if that's an annual problem.
- **Weeds:** If you're really after "The Perfect Lawn," you might think about applying a weed-control product sometime during the fall, too. This will help destroy perennial weeds that will happily ride out the cold winter months, only to return bigger and stronger next spring in your lawn.

away, thanks to a built-in drainage system. There's also a rubber armrest on the front edge for added comfort. For more information, call (800) 755-9223.

BUTTERFLIES IN FLIGHT. If you find yourself in Pittsburgh this summer, stop by the **Phipps Conservatory & Botanical Gardens** to see hundreds of butterflies in their annual "Butterfly Forest" exhibit. Here, visitors can observe various species of butterflies at close range, including monarchs, zebras, julias, and queens, all in a dazzling array of shapes, colors, and sizes. For more information, call (412) 622-6914 or visit www.phipps.conservatory.org.

AUGUST IN THE GARDEN. It's late summer and the harvest is in full swing. In the flower garden, however, you can divide daylilies and Japanese irises so they have time to set roots before the cold sets in. Also, pick strawflowers, zinnias, roses, celosia, and globe amaranth for drying. Finally, lay down a **new layer of compost** and dig it in a few inches. Your soil is likely depleted from the long growing season and in need of rich, fresh nutrients for next year.

GREEN SCENE WINNER. We're happy to report that one of our regular contributors, **Adam Levine**, has won a 2000 Quill & Trowel Award from the Garden Writers Association of America (GWAA) for a story he wrote in *Green Scene*. The award is for his March 1999 story about Michelle Murphy's rooftop garden in West Philadelphia. Congratulations, Adam!

TOTAL IMPACT. Want to learn about the latest achievements of Philadelphia Green, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's urban-greening program? If so, read our newsletter **Impact 2000**, which reports on our greening initiatives throughout the city, as well as related national trends. Recent subjects have included *urban agriculture*, *vacant land issues*, and *youth horticulture activities*. For FREE copies of these reports, please call (215) 988-8809 or e-mail: jgannon@pennhort.org.





ASK A GARDENER

by Hotline Volunteers

In spring, we used a grub-control chemical on our lawn. In mid-June, however, we noticed grubs eating sections of our lawn. Again we put down grub control. It seemed as if the grubs were gone, but then there were beetles all over our plants. What can we do to control this infestation?

Mary Ellen Paz, Mt. Holly, NJ

Since grubs are the larval form of beetles, the beetles that are in your garden signify that your grub control didn't cure the problem. Unfortunately, some grub reducers take a few years to see results, and some grubs are even resistant to pesticides. You are not alone with this prob-

lem, however; Japanese beetles, the type you most likely have, are a common problem throughout the area. There are also organic products that eliminate grubs—one is called Doom and another called Japandemic. These pesticides use a bacteria to kill the grubs that is harmless to other organisms. Usually, only one application is necessary, but occasionally an annual re-application is needed.

The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control, edited by Barbara W. Ellis & Fern Marshall Bradley discusses some organic methods to rid your lawn and garden of pests. If you're a PHS member, you may borrow this book from the McLean Library by calling 215-988-8772 or e-mail: jalling@pennhort.org.

Can you tell me the name of the attractive shrub that blooms in the garden near the Art Museum in early August? There are pink and white varieties, both of which have a lilac-like cluster for a bloom.

Edward Lonergan,
address unknown

You are most likely referring to crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*). This shrub or small tree is often multi-stemmed, and can grow to 15-25 feet in height. The flower panicles can be 6-8 inches long and 3-5 inches wide. Crape myrtles are available in a wide color range, from white, pink, and purple to deep red. Its bark is smooth and gray in color, and many varieties have exfoliating bark, which exposes a varicolored underbark—excellent for winter interest. Its only caveat is that it is only hardy to Zone 7. Check your zone before planting, as many places in the Mid-Atlantic region are in Zone 6.

Do you have a question for our garden experts? If so, contact PHS's Horticultural Hotline in the McLean Library, which is open Monday-Friday, 9:30-noon. Phone (215) 988-8777; fax (215) 988-8783; email: jalling@pennhort.org



Courtesy of the Scotts Company

Changes Afoot!

Starting with this issue, *Green Scene* magazine will begin a new publishing schedule. In the past, our full-color magazine has come out in such off-season months as September, November, and January. Now, we will shift its entire calendar back a month, allowing us to publish issues that better coincide with such seasonal events as the autumn harvest, the winter holidays, and more. So what does

this all mean to you? It simply means that *Green Scene* will start appearing in your mailbox at the beginning of the following months: August, October, December, February, April, and June.

For you diehard collectors of *Green Scene*, we're also adjusting the serialization (Vol. and No.) to make it coincide with the yearly calendar. Usually, volumes run from summer to summer, but this year (thanks

to an inspired idea from PHS librarian Jane Alling), Volume 28 will be extended three extra issues, making nine in total. The February 2001 issue, then, will be called "Volume 29, No. 1." This may sound confusing at first, but believe me, it will make searching for back issues so much easier.

-Pete Prown

Per-Renny-als!

The Life and Work of a Philadelphia Flower Show Favorite



Left: Plants ready to go: lush and enticing pots of hydrangea, dahlia, pelargonium, delphinium, coleus, euphorbia, and pink salvia.

Right: Renny and friend at the nursery.

Story by Patricia McLaughlin

They told him a nursery specializing in specimen perennials couldn't make it. But that was before Renny Reynolds invented the "rent-a-plant" market niche at his retail outlet, Renny Hortulus Farm Nursery. A longtime Philadelphia Flower Show exhibitor, Renny bought his farm 20 years ago. He'd been looking for a couple of years, driving down from New York on weekends, before he found what he was looking for: a "perfect" 18th-century farmhouse and 72 acres in Wrightstown, Bucks County. "The land was breathtaking—rolling hills and a stream," he says. The house was perfect, in that its integrity hadn't been violated by bad renovation. Or any renovation, for that matter. But the fact that it was a 'complete wreck' was perfect, too, because it made it affordable.

Nine years ago, with the house comfortably restored and a good start made on the gardens, he opened his nursery next door. It had been a longtime daydream: a nursery where he'd grow specimen plants—mostly tropicals and subtropicals—in containers. Only one problem with that idea, as one expert after another kindly pointed out to him: Not enough people are willing to pay for them. Indeed, he'd noticed that even the biggest, most established nurseries stocked mostly the small,

young plants he thought of as "grocery-store size." And once he started making serious plans for his nursery, he could see why—mature, beautifully grown specimen plants can't support themselves.

"First, you build a greenhouse," he says, "Then you need another, and then you need a propagation house, and then a cooler, and then a greenhouse with a taller roof for taller plants. You can end up with a huge investment in greenhouses, and nothing at the other end."

There's only so much you can do to streamline the operation because you can't negotiate with plants. You can't talk them out of needing to be weeded or watered—you can only persuade them to be so much more productive than they're naturally inclined to be. By the

time you grow a plumbago into a 6-foot-tall, tousle-headed standard, you've paid for up to *five* years of room and board, including lots of labor-intensive weeding, feeding, watering, pruning, de-bugging, general TLC, and a long, luxurious winter vacation in an expensively heated, humidified, and ventilated greenhouse. That plumbago has been costing you money since day one, and it has yet to make a dime.

Moreover, the market for \$150 plumbagos is limited. Still, it must exist, given how fast White Flower Farm sold out of its \$950 yellow clivias...but how big can it be? Renny's ingenious solution was that his plants must work for a living, just like everyone else. Unlike the average nursery's lady-of-leisure plants



Photo by Patricia McLaughlin/Digital imaging by Scott Hoisington



Greenhouse staffer Meg Ware deadheads Marguerite daisies.

that lounge around the greenhouse for weeks or months on end soaking up the sun and guzzling expensive water and plant food, his plants work outside the home. They get paid for it, too.

They're "rent-a-plants." They make personal appearances at all manner of snazzy affairs: weddings, charity balls, cocktail parties, museum openings, and the like. (Well, all except the *Anisodonteia*, which "doesn't like going to parties," Renny notes) It's a whole new market niche for flowering plants. To understand how Renny came to this conceptual breakthrough, we should

back up here to his childhood and his first meaningful relationship with a *Pachysandra* cutting.

It came from the yard next door to the house he grew up in back in St. Louis. The next-door neighbor, maybe hoping to keep rambunctious 8-year-old Renny out of her hair and out of her flower beds, showed the kid how to root it. "It was amazing," Renny remembers. It was just like magic: he'd created a whole new plant. Something from nothing, the sort of thing that hooks most serious gardeners for life.

Thus hooked, he gardened his way

One of the many interesting plants in Renny's greenhouses, chenille plant (*Acalypha hispida*) has long flowering catkins that are usually red or, as shown here, pink.



Harry Kalish

through school, graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in landscape architecture, and moved to New York to join the heirs of Frederick Law Olmstead. It was only after he achieved his ambition—a job as a landscape architect—that he noticed how little it had in common with actual gardening. He was spending his life cooped up in an office, working at a drawing board under a lot of fluorescent lights.

Garden-lorn, he started doing balconies, terraces, and decks for friends in his spare time, and then he did one for designer Bill Blass, and his business took off. There's no greater luck than being able to make a living by pursuing your passion. On the other hand, he soon learned, the job involved as much heavy lifting as creative imagination: "If it isn't the elements, it's the apartment superintendents," he says. "In addition to dealing with heat and wind, there's the matter of getting plants up 40 stories in small freight elevators."

Eventually, he noticed that the people he was designing and installing roof gardens for needed just as much help with their interior landscapes when they entertained. He started doing flowers for parties, which led to flower shops on Park Avenue and in the Plaza and Carlyle hotels in New York. He also began designing, planning, and stage-managing parties, balls, weddings, perfume launches and other sorts of galas for clients as diverse as the U.S. Open, Yves

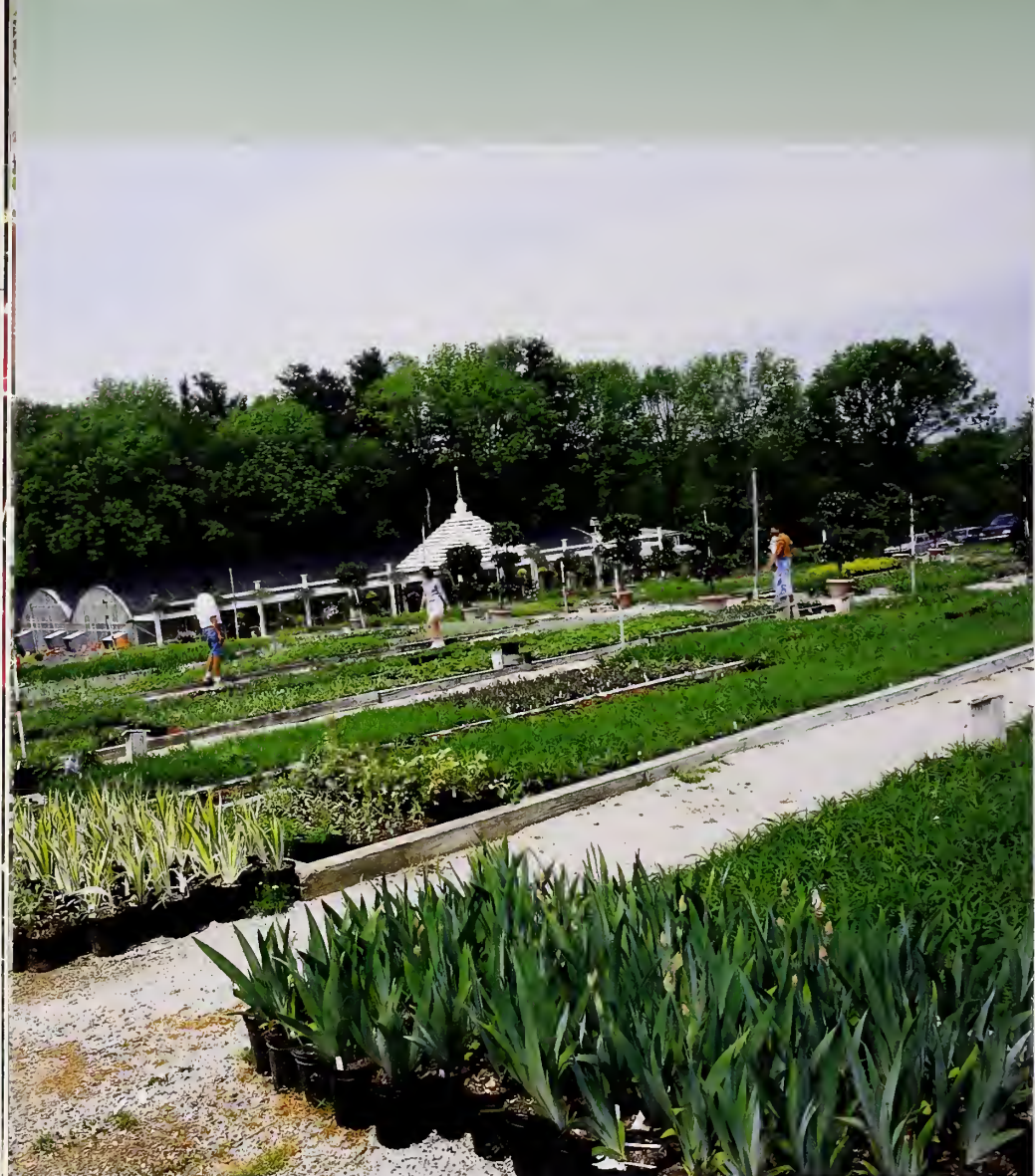
Saint-Laurent, Diana Ross, Diana Vreeland, Merrill Lynch, and Studio 54, not to mention the White House under three presidents.

What's Renny's secret to success? "It's all about scale," he said one Friday afternoon last summer. At the time, he was in the middle of turning a sterile country-club ballroom in a Philadelphia exurb into an enchanted wedding grove of *Ficus benjamina*, all a-twinkle with candles and fragrant with flowers. "It was a huge room I'm working in," he explained. If he'd have filled it with rows of banquet tables, it would've looked like an unusually pretty train shed or institutional dining room. Instead, he centered a trio of round tables around each of the ficus trees, put votive lights in crystal

globes on the tables and hung them at different heights on each of the tree's branches. The next day, he ringed every tree trunk with a wreath of roses and hydrangeas. Finally, in the cozy shelter of its tree, each cluster of tables became an inviting little, conversational village.

What he'd done to this once-sterile room is not unlike what Gertrude Jekyll, one of his heroes, did to the Victorian garden, and what Capability Brown before her did to the English landscape. He naturalized it, got rid of the rows, manipulated the scale, varied the levels of interest, painted it with drifts of color.

Nice, but it's still not exactly gardening, which is why he wanted the farm in Wrightstown. There, on weekends, he spends every waking moment in the gar-



Left: A view of the nursery in Wrightstown, PA.

viable: "For people on a budget, renting flowering plants goes a lot further than buying cut flowers." So brides get more bloom for their buck and his specimen plants in pots get to make a living. And then there's the farm: he and Jack Staub are creating a foundation so that its gardens, nursery, and horticultural library will continue as a public garden and a resource for horticultural education after they're gone. All the while, it gets prettier each year. 🌱

Patricia McLaughlin writes the Style column in the *Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine*. She gardens in the Spring Garden section of the city. Renny's Hortulus Farm Nursery is located at 60 Thompson Road in Wrightstown, PA, (215) 598-0550.

dens, working on the woodland walk, the stream walk, the perennial borders, the yellow foliage garden, or the sunny red and orange garden. The farm produces, among other things, 25,000 stems of peonies for his flower shop in a good year. There are heirloom vegetable gardens, the domain of his partner, gardening writer Jack Staub. And there are also geese, ducks, swans, pheasants, guinea fowl, doves, dogs, cats, sheep, horses and a goat—everything, he says, but a cow. He refers to them collectively as "the kids."

What he calls "the appetite for growing everything" is also why he wanted the nursery which, in the spirit of compromise, now offers both specimen tropicals and a zillion varieties of young perennials. But it all connects: Besides providing the nursery's oleanders, alliga-

tor *Solanum* (potato vine) standards, and starburst *Clerodendrum* with "part-time jobs" that let them earn their keep, the business of creating indoor fairylands for galas picks up the tab for Renny's other creative projects. This includes renting a fleet of front-end loaders for a weekend to play God on the farm, resculpting hills and dales, turning the creek into a necklace of woodsy reflecting ponds, and moving 30-foot trees from where they happen to be to where they belong. (This last achievement, he says, is "like moving furniture: It completely changes the room, and it's great, great fun.")

Besides, it was only because he'd worked on so many parties—some where the sky was the limit, some with considerably lower budgets—that he had the flash of insight that makes the specimen plants-in-containers business

Harry Kalish

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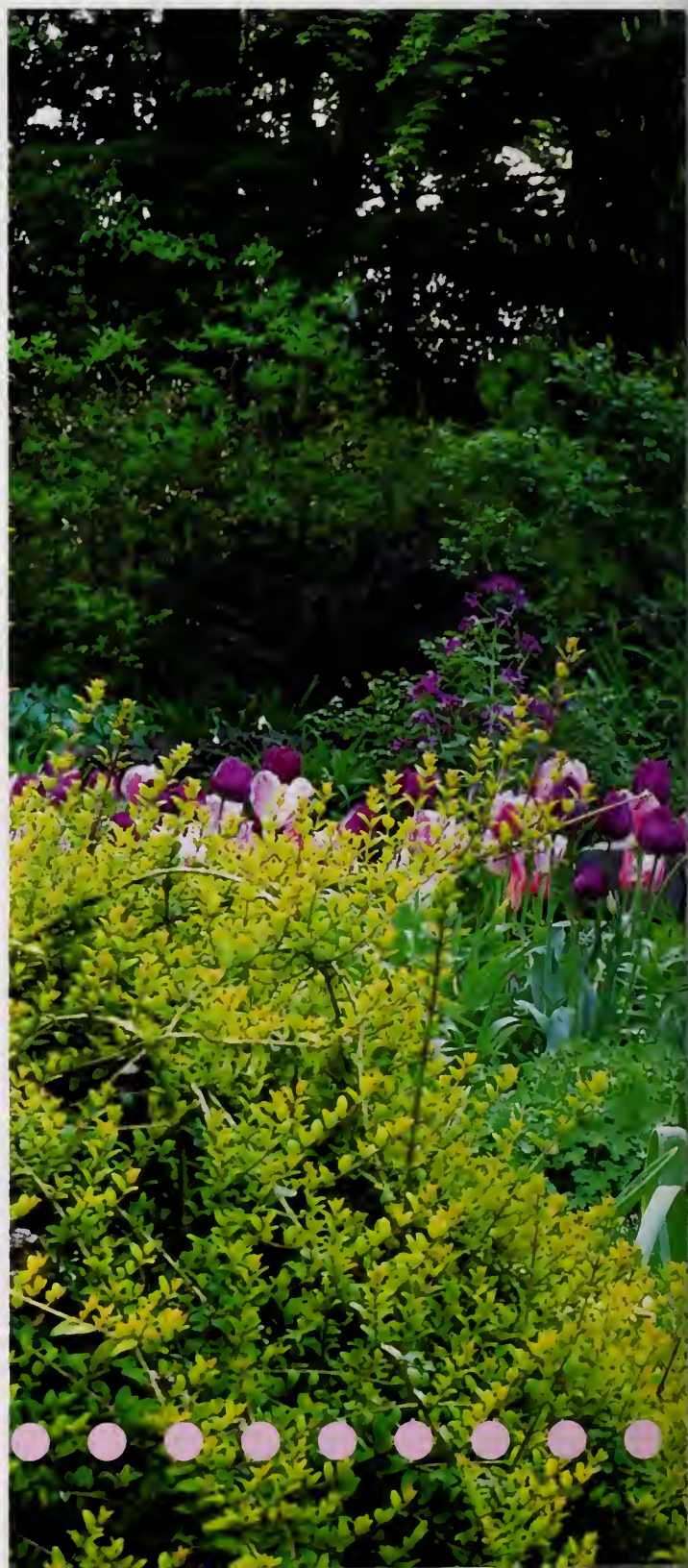
Accents &

How to Place Ornaments in the Harmonious Garden

Story & photography by Beverly Fitts

Garden ornaments are definitely trendy. Everything from Greco-Roman sculptures to pink plastic flamingoes can currently be found in specialty shops, garden centers, and even supermarkets. It's fun to hunt for just the right one, but with the vast selection, the process can be a little overwhelming. How do you choose? And how do you display them effectively? Find out as we explore the art of finding and placing ornaments in the garden.

ACCENTS are larger ornaments that rely on contrasting form, texture, and color to attract our attention.



Grace Notes



CHOOSING ORNAMENTS

Choosing the right ornament is really a matter of building unity in the garden. Barnes Foundation founder Albert Barnes once wrote, "UNITY is the ideal by which all art is judged," and that applies to garden design, too. Ornaments work best when they're part of the overall plan,

and when they harmonize and unify the garden. Look for a piece that blends with the garden's formality and style. That's the first step towards unity.

My friend, Kathy, lives in a fieldstone farmhouse. When she terraced her sloping property for a garden and swimming pool, she built walls using the same stone

as the house. Recently, she found the perfect ornament. It's a large, moss-covered Irish saddle stone. The rough, utilitarian stone blends perfectly with the informal style of her house and garden. It also repeats the stone building materials, tying the ornament to the house and walls. She bought the old Irish stone as a present for her husband on St. Patrick's Day, celebrating the family's heritage with panache. It unifies, personalizes, and adds distinction to the garden.

So consider what's special about your house, garden or property and choose your ornaments accordingly.

LEARNING PLACEMENT

Placing ornaments effectively is easy, especially if you divide them into two basic groups. **ACCENTS** are large, important ornaments. They're focal points that attract the eye and draw us into the garden. When placed at the end of an axis or in the middle of a clearing against a contrasting backdrop, they demand attention. **GRACE NOTES** are smaller ornaments. Tucked into perennial beds or shrubbery that repeat their color, texture or form, they become little surprises discovered while walking through the garden.

Driving past the quarry near our house, I caught sight of the perfect *accent* piece for my garden. I quickly reversed the car and turned into the quarry's driveway to take a closer look. Sitting near the entrance was a bench about 3-feet long. It was made of rough stone—just one slab stretched across two

REPETITION of both the vertical form and silver color of this chimney pot unifies the composition.



uprights. I was looking for an **ACCENT** to put at the end of the path that leads from our terrace, but a statue or sculpture was what I originally had in mind. The minute I saw the bench, however, I knew it was right. The bench would capture the woodland atmosphere, repeat the stone of the terrace, and provide a wonderful place to view the mass of spring wildflowers that carpet our woodland floor. I bought it without hesitation, and went on my way...absolutely ecstatic.

I also placed a **GRACE NOTE** in the woods, near the base of our river birch (*Betula nigra*). It's a large rock that I bought with my birthday money. I dug the rock into the earth and partially concealed it with ferns. The rock has a depression that catches rainwater and forms a small pool. So, on top near the water, I added two stone lovebirds. They look appropriate, even charming, and are sometimes joined by the real thing.

Both the bench and the lovebirds' basin repeat the stone of the terrace and blend with the style of the woodland. They build harmony and unity. Now all I have to do is choose plants that display the ornaments effectively and establish them as either **ACCENTS** or **GRACE NOTES**.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Displaying ornaments is where an artist really shines. Some people instinctively do it well, but as for me, I like a little help. So, I modify the design principles in Leroy Hannebaum's *Landscape Design: A Practical Approach* and extend them for use with garden ornaments.

REPETITION establishes unity in the garden. Therefore, I use ornaments made of materials that repeat those of the house or ones based on a theme, such as animals or birds. If the ornament is a grace note, I also repeat its form, texture or color in the nearby plants.

For instance, Japanese painted ferns



GRACE NOTES are smaller ornaments that rely on repeating form, texture, and color to tie them to their surroundings.



SEQUENCE leads our eye progressively from dark-green foliage, to gray-green, to gray, and finally to the gray-white color of this statue. This example is at Blickling Hall on England's Norfolk coast.

(*Athyrium niponicum* 'Pictum') surround the rock and stone birds in my woods, and their silver and green fronds, in turn, match the color of the rock and the lovebirds. To that, I added maroon *Trillium erectum* to match the color of the fern's rachis, plus the silver variegated foliage of *Asarum shuttleworthii*, and—voilà!—a grace note. [A rachis is the main stem of a compound leaf or cluster of flowers.—ed.] These repeated colors bind the grace

note to its surroundings, help it recede into the garden area, and create a unified composition. Again, it's all about unity.

CONTRAST provides interest and variety. It also attracts attention, so I use this principle to develop compelling focal points. Surrounding the ornament with plants that contrast its form, texture or color make it stand out, and hold the eye. [See the photo on the cover of this issue.]

BALANCE is either symmetrical or asymmetrical. Ornaments can be displayed effectively both ways. For example, two identical terra-cotta pots sit symmetrically on either side of a path. This formal placement creates a sense of entrance and it works well even though I have an informal garden. Identical plants in each pot accentuate the symmetry.

An example of asymmetrical balance is a tall, narrow pagoda placed opposite

SCALE appears appropriate when a 6-inch frog is placed in a small clearing, under a small perennial with fine foliage.

several rocks lining one edge of a pond. The vertical mass of the pagoda roughly equals the horizontal mass of the rocks. (Picture an adult on one end of a see-saw and three children on the other.)

EMPHASIS draws attention to important parts of a garden. On a residential property, the primary point of emphasis is usually the front door. To some degree, all ornaments are points of emphasis, whether they're accents or grace notes. Emphasis is created by contrasting the form, color, or texture of the surrounding plants to the ornament. Strong contrast creates an accent, while less contrast and more repetition creates a grace note.

SEQUENCE suggests a gradual change in the form, texture, or color of plants. Gradual change minimizes variety and leads the eye in an orderly fashion to a focal point. It builds stronger accents by holding the eye on the contrasting elements that immediately surround the ornament.

I saw a great example of **SEQUENCE** on a trip to England's Norfolk coast, where my husband and I visited the National Trust gardens at Blickling Hall. Part of the estate is a huge sunken and walled perennial garden. In the middle of one wall is a staircase, flanked by matching sculptures. The large herbaceous bed at the wall's base perfectly demonstrates sequential planting by gradually changing foliage color. It begins with dark green foliage farthest from the ornaments, moves to gray-green, then to gray, and finally to gray-white statues placed against dark-green ivy. This sequential composition keeps the emphasis on the statues and staircase. *[See photo above left.]*

SCALE, however, ultimately determines the success or failure of an ornament. Can you imagine a 12-inch rabbit in the middle of a three-acre lawn, or a life-size elephant in the backyard of a townhouse? Both would be incongruous. Ornaments are best in areas appropriate

to their size: small ornaments in small spaces, large ornaments in large spaces. Plants, too, should relate to the size of the ornaments: small ornaments with small plants and large ornaments with large plants. Harmony is the goal. *[See photo at right.]*

USING YOUR EYE

You don't have to be an artist to display ornaments effectively, especially if you use the design principles below. When I go about placing a particular ornament, I consider all the principles and then choose the ones that are most applicable to my particular **ACCENT** or **GRACE NOTE**.

These guidelines help me choose, place and display garden ornaments effectively. They instill confidence and keep me focused on the goals of harmony and unity. (They also keep me from buying every ornament I see!)

If you'd like a little help, give these guidelines a try. Choose ornaments that blend with the formality and style of your



garden. Place them as accents or grace notes. Display them using the principles of repetition, contrast, balance, scale, emphasis, or sequence. Then sit back and enjoy the harmony and unity in your garden, knowing it's "the ideal by which all art is judged." ■

Beverly Fitts is a garden lecturer, photographer, and former president of the Hardy Plant Society (Mid-Atlantic Group). In addition to a busy lecturing schedule, she also finds time to chair the Container Display Class for the Philadelphia Flower Show.

6 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GARDEN DESIGN

- **REPETITION** establishes unity in the garden.
- **CONTRAST** provides variety and interest in the garden.
- **BALANCE** promotes a satisfying arrangement of plants and objects. It is either symmetrical or asymmetrical.
- **SCALE** keeps plants and objects in proportion to each other and to their surroundings.
- **EMPHASIS** draws attention to an object.
- **SEQUENCE** leads our eyes in an orderly progression using the gradual manipulation of form, texture, or color.



YELLOW

IN THE LANDSCAPE

A Tale Of Three Sunny Plant Introductions

Story and photography by Dr. Tomasz Aniśko

If you decide that your garden could benefit from a subtle touch of yellow, there are three new plant introductions from Longwood Gardens worth considering. Longwood is widely known for its lavish horticultural displays, but few people realize that it also has an ongoing research program designed to introduce better plants for those displays. Past success stories include the introduction of New Guinea impatiens and the development of a whole series of cannas.



The three introductions presented here exemplify a lengthy process of careful evaluation and observation involved in selecting and naming a cultivar. These plants not only possess outstanding landscape qualities, but are also deeply rooted in the rich horticultural history of the area. They were found and cared for by many dedicated plantspeople, from botanists to gardeners, and now are being passed along to skillful nursery workers so the plants can become available to the general public.

YELLOW-BERRIED TOPEL HOLLY

(*Ilex* × *attenuata* 'Longwood Gold')

Mystery surrounds the origin of this plant. Longwood raised it from open-pollinated seeds distributed in 1971 by the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania under the name of *Ilex forrestii*, a rare species from East Tibet and China. However, when germinated and grown for several years, the plants were re-identified as seedlings of *Ilex* × *attenuata* (older name *I. topeli*). The origin of those seeds distributed nearly 30 years ago is not recorded, but it is likely that they were collected from a plant received by Morris Arboretum in 1964 as *Ilex forrestii* from F. D. Moore Nursery in Narberth, PA (later re-identified as *Ilex* × *attenuata* 'Fosteri').

Among the 19 plants grown at Longwood from that seed, one plant had yellow rather than the usual red fruit. In 1976, this plant was propagated for further observations, while the remaining red-berried plants were discarded. One of the propagations was planted in the Longwood's visitor parking lot, where it remains today and can be admired as a full grown, 24-year-old specimen.

'Longwood Gold' grows into a very handsome, evergreen tree with a regular, dense, conical habit, and is generously decorated with bright yellow fruits that



remain on the tree throughout the winter. This tree has proved to be more reliably hardy than many other Topel hollies. This selection has been in favor with Longwood's visitors for a long time and younger plants are currently used in various locations around the garden, including container plantings and the Conservatory Christmas display. The cultivar was named and registered with the Holly Society of America in 1998.

CUCUMBER-TREE MAGNOLIA

(*Magnolia acuminata* var. *subcordata* 'Peirce's Park')

Longwood's magnificent specimen of the yellow-flowered magnolia standing on the grounds of the former Peirce's Park provides a silent testimony of the period of active floristic exploration in North America. Shortly before the end of the 18th century, brothers Joshua and

Left: *Ilex* × *attenuata* 'Longwood Gold'

Above: *Magnolia acuminata* var. *subcordata* 'Peirce's Park'



Left: *Corylopsis glabrescens*
'Longwood Chimes'

SOURCES

Propagation material has been released to several nurseries, including:

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West Chester, PA 19382
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Broken Arrow Nursery (retail)
13 Broken Arrow Road
Hamden, CT 08518
(203) 288-1026
www.brokenarrownursery.com

Rare Find Nursery (retail)
957 Patterson Road
Jackson, NJ 08527
(732) 833-0613

Rivendell Nursery (wholesale)
Stathem's Neck Road
P.O. Box 82
Greenwich, NJ 08323

Roslyn Nursery (retail)
211 Burrs Lane
Dix Hills, NY 11746
(516) 643-9347,
www.roslynnursery.com

Samuel Peirce began planting an arboretum that later became a nucleus of today's Longwood Gardens. During this period, many plants newly discovered in the vast East Coast forest were introduced to gardens in America and Europe. One such new discovery was a yellow-flowering variety of *Magnolia acuminata*, originally found in 1788 by French explorer André Michaux in South Carolina, only a few years before the Peirces conceived the idea of creating an arboretum.

The specimen growing today at Longwood probably found its way to Peirce's Park with the help of either Humphry Marshall or William Bartram—two prominent figures of Philadelphia's horticultural circles at that time—who may have received this new variety from Michaux himself. Longwood's magnolia was mentioned as "a very fine" specimen in such early dendrological publications as the 1853 edition of Thomas Meehan's *American Handbook of Ornamental Trees* and the 1865 edition of François André Michaux's *North American Sylva*.

After 200 years, the tree measures over 90 feet in height and over 12 feet in circumference. In spring, it never fails to adorn itself with an abundance of yellow flowers that open high in the crown as its leaves emerge. It's the largest specimen of this variety in existence. To preserve the unique history of this treasured tree, Longwood's specimen was given cultivar status in 1998 and the name 'Peirce's Park' was registered with the Magnolia Society.

FRAGRANT WINTER HAZEL (*Corylopsis glabrescens* 'Longwood Chimes')

The story of this plant began in 1983 with the request from U.S. National Arboretum director Dr. John Creech to Dr. Clifford Parks, professor of botany at the University of North Carolina, to collect seeds of *Corylopsis glabrescens* in Japan. Dr. Parks spent five months there and, in the fall of 1983, while searching for plants at the elevation of about 3000 feet on the Ebino Highland in southern Kyushu, he found himself walking under the canopy of *C. glabrescens*. These

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multi-stemmed shrubs, about 10-15 feet in height, formed nearly a pure stand on a volcanic slope.

The bulk of the winter-hazel seed collected by Dr. Parks went to the U.S. National Arboretum, which in turn distributed the plants grown from that seed. Longwood Gardens received three seedlings in 1985 and evaluated them for several years in the nursery before selecting one outstanding specimen for planting in the garden.

This plant has flowers about 50% larger and inflorescences about 50% longer (about 2 in. long with 11-12 flowers per raceme) than what is typical for the species. Individual flowers open wide, somewhat resembling flowers of forsythia but with a more pleasing soft, pale-yellow color. This is much gentler on eyes and is easier to incorporate into early

spring landscapes. Its flowers are not only showy, but also delightfully fragrant, readily apparent to the passerby. They open about 2 weeks later than other *Corylopsis* and are therefore less prone to late-freeze damage. In fact, in some years this is the only winter-hazel that flowers reliably at Longwood, while the other species have flowers damaged by freeze.

The original shrub grows near the Chimes Tower at Longwood, hence the name 'Longwood Chimes' given to the cultivar and registered with the International Registration Authority for Unassigned Woody Genera at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in 1999.

Dr. Tomasz Anisko is curator of plants at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA.

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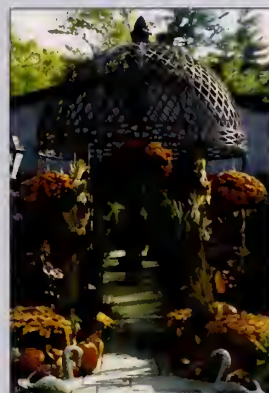
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A Garden Artist Remembered

The Photographs of
Barbara Bruno



Story by Lorraine Kiefer

When visiting Barbara Bruno's garden in spring or summer, one might have seen a charming basket of pansies on the garden gate, dancing poppies reminiscent of Flanders fields, or clay pots lovingly grouped here and there. These were just a few of the gardening signatures she created in her lifetime. She also had a long and very close association with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. It was in *Green Scene* that her beautiful photographs, paintings, and articles were shared with so many other plant enthusiasts during the past two decades. Barbara died last fall, but here, we pay tribute to her many talents, particularly those that involved her camera and unerring eye for horticultural beauty.



Bold red poppies re-seed themselves generously each year. Here, white daisies escort them for their annual spring parade throughout Barbara's garden.



Above: Barbara's studio was surrounded by her gardens. She had a passion for antique roses and other heirloom plants. Favorites such as the stately foxglove and silvery artemesias were part of her gentle, casual style.

Right: Her studio in winter, a place of bucolic peace.





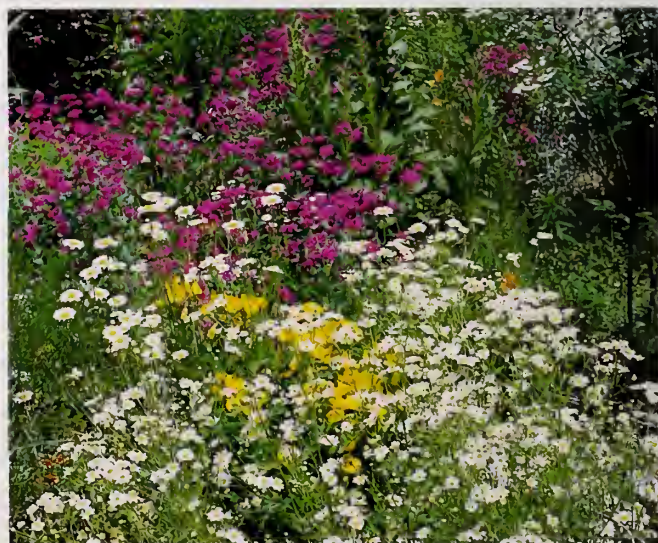
Left: The sunsets of southern New Jersey often stretch on forever, especially along fields or bay fronts. Barbara took delight in these scenes and often frequented “down Jersey spots” that were little known to the public. **Below:** One of her many primroses, here showered with pink spring-blossom petals from a nearby tree.



Among my fondest memories of Barbara is one of a sunny early-summer afternoon at her house. We lunched outdoors at a small table nestled amongst a patch of fragrant hyperion-lemon lilies. She made us wonderful, healthy dishes from freshly picked vegetables, which we consumed while birds sang, butterflies and hummingbirds skirted our space, and a small plane lazily hummed in the far distance. This was a magical visit to a place fashioned with hard work and tempered with the joy of a plant connoisseur. Time flew as we talked and went from one plant to another in her delightful gardens in Elmer, New Jersey.

Whenever I visited, I came away with seeds or cuttings for my own garden. Some of my favorite plants, including a beautiful stand of Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis*) and a bed of poppies, came from Barbara. Then there was the winter I “plant sat” while Barbara was in Northern California with her husband, Joe. When she came to drop them off, she made several trips in her car, hauling her pots of herbs, scented geraniums, rosemary, sweet olive, and other tender treasures. Now one of the very same large rosemary plants is back here, a gift from Joe after Barbara's death. I cherish this rosemary for “remembrance” and have it planted outdoors in a very protected spot.

Joe and Barbara lived in their charming old brick home almost all of their 38 years of marriage. It was there on Henry Avenue that she started her gardens.



Left: Barbara collected all sorts of *Primula* and often traded seeds with friends from various plant societies. Those that were not hardy to South Jersey were kept in a cool greenhouse on the property. **Bottom Right:** In late May, the cottage garden looked so welcoming as one drove up the Bruno's driveway. **Bottom Left:** Another side of her artistic talents, this charming water-color depicts Barbara (right) during her college days with a friend in a Philadelphia park. It is titled "Pigeon Ladies: 1958."

During her multifaceted career, Barbara sold dried flower arrangements, published a book, and did many illustrations and photographs for magazines, inspired from the beautiful blooms in her gardens.

Thinking back, I remember Barbara as a quiet and gentle person. She walked daily and had a real kinship with the turning of the seasons, as well as all the subtle changes that occurred in her garden and surrounding woodlands. There was never a time when I spoke with her that she didn't tell me about some rare primrose that was blooming or about the seeds she had collected which finally germinated. And it was with a fresh joy that she appreciated all of these mini miracles.

Whether in person or through her paintings and photographs, it was clear to all that Barbara's talents were prolific. How lucky are we whose lives were touched by her. Indeed, there are many of us. ☐

Thanks to Joe Bruno for his help in preparing this story.



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NATIVE



AMERICANS

7 CHARMING NATIVES FOR THE MID-ATLANTIC GARDEN

Introduction by Dorothy Wright Plant Profiles by Bill Lamack

Do you dream of spending *less* time working in your garden and *more* time sipping cool lemonade in the shade? Fortunately, you can reduce your chores by using native plants in the more challenging corners of your garden. For example, that hot, dry spot has the makings of a colorful meadow, while the shady nook where the grass always dies out can become a cool woodland refuge. Once native plants are established, you're likely to spend less time, energy, and money taking care of them than you would on some of their more finicky, non-native cousins. So, consider introducing a few of the interesting natives listed here into your own garden...and then sit back and watch them grow.

Left: Creeping phlox.
Right: Mistflower.



WHITE WOOD ASTER [2, 3]
WREATH GOLDENROD [1]

If you're looking for color to light up your shaded garden in late summer and fall, try the combination of white wood aster (*Aster divaricatus*) and wreath goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*). Both plants grow under average conditions, but tolerate summer drought and will start blooming in August, sometimes finishing in October. White wood aster's 2-foot wiry stems—occasionally with a blackish tint—are clothed in clean heart-shaped

foliage and topped by three-quarter-inch white flower heads.

Wreath goldenrod doesn't fit most people's ideas of what is a goldenrod, especially since it grows in the shade and is clump-forming. At times, the arching, purplish stems have a bluish-white bloom similar to a blueberry, hence its other common name: blue-stemmed goldenrod. Yellow flowers bloom along the 2-foot stems in the axles of the lance-shaped leaves. They form airy clumps of color in open shade, especially when sitting next to white wood aster.

MISTFLOWER [1, 3, 5]

While the flowering effect of white wood aster and wreath goldenrod is subtle, the late summer/fall blooming mistflower or hardy ageratum (*Eupatorium coelestinum*) produces a bolder impact. Its 2- to 3-foot stems are topped with intense violet flower heads, similar in shape and color to the popular annual-bedding plant, ageratum. It can grow in partial shade, as well as in scorching afternoon sun. Under favorable conditions (moist, well-drained soil), it can spread vigorously by



Clockwise from left: Little bluestem grass; white wood aster and wreath goldenrod; Barbara's buttons.



Photos this page by Bill Lamack



stolons, though we have yet to encounter serious problems of invasiveness in the garden. Last September, mistflower was the star of the display garden at Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve. This plant also survived both the drought and browsing deer virtually unscathed, in addition to attracting Monarch butterflies by the dozen.

CREeping PHLOX [1, 3]

Mistflower makes for an excellent tall groundcover, but creeping phlox's (*Phlox stolonifera*) foliar mat tops out at 3 to 4 inches, while its flowering stems reach a height of 8 inches in April and May. The flowers are tubular with five spreading lobes and come in shades of lavender,

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- Promote biological diversity, along with food and shelter for birds and butterflies
- They come in a vast range of shapes, sizes, and colors



Three-toothed cinquefoil.

LITTLE BLUESTEM GRASS [1, 3, 5]

If you have a dry, sunny spot, you have the perfect spot for little bluestem grass (*Schizachyrium scoparium* "The Blues"). This beautiful clumper tops out at 2 to 2.5 feet and has powder blue leaves which turn amber in the fall. Little bluestem shrugs off the worst snow storms and remains upright through the winter. After last year's drought, I can testify to this plant's incredible toughness. Indeed, this kind of resilience is what "native gardening" is all about. ☐

Bill Lamack is the grounds and nursery manager of Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, Washington Crossing, PA. Dorothy Wright is a writer and editor based in Ardmore, PA.

Flora Graphics

pink and white. They attract early-rising swallowtail butterflies and early-arriving hummingbirds, as well.

Creeping phlox can also give off a pleasing scent when grown in mass. This is a favorite groundcover for shade, because its creeping stems produce an evergreen mat of foliage that prevents weed germination, yet still allows taller wildflowers to grow up through it. It likes a moist, well-drained spot in part shade, but tolerates drier and sunnier spots, though it doesn't do as well.

THREE-TOOTHED CINQUEFOIL

[4]

My favorite groundcover for sun is three-toothed cinquefoil (*Potentilla tri-dentata*), producing an evergreen mat that is 6-inches tall. The small leaves are shiny, three-parted and each leaflet has three terminal rounded teeth. In the fall, the leaves take on various shades of purple with some red and yellow mixed in.

If attractive evergreen foliage wasn't

enough, three-toothed cinquefoil produces masses of small white, rose-like flowers starting in early June and lasting for at least 4 weeks. This plant does very well under harsh conditions. I have it growing in dry clay on a sunny, hot, exposed slope where the driveway empties onto the road. Considering how tough it is, it's hard to believe it is considered endangered in Pennsylvania.

BARBARA'S BUTTONS [2, 3]

Another endangered plant that makes an excellent garden subject is Barbara's buttons (*Marshallia grandiflora*). Barbara's buttons is an endangered relative of the aster. From a basal clump of shiny, strap-shaped leaves rises 1-foot flower stalks in June and July. Flower heads are lavender, similar in form to bachelor buttons, and attractive to butterflies. It does well in moist, well-drained soils in part shade to full sun.

SOURCES

- [1] **Meadowbrook Farm**
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(215) 887-5900
- [2] **Mostardi Nursery**
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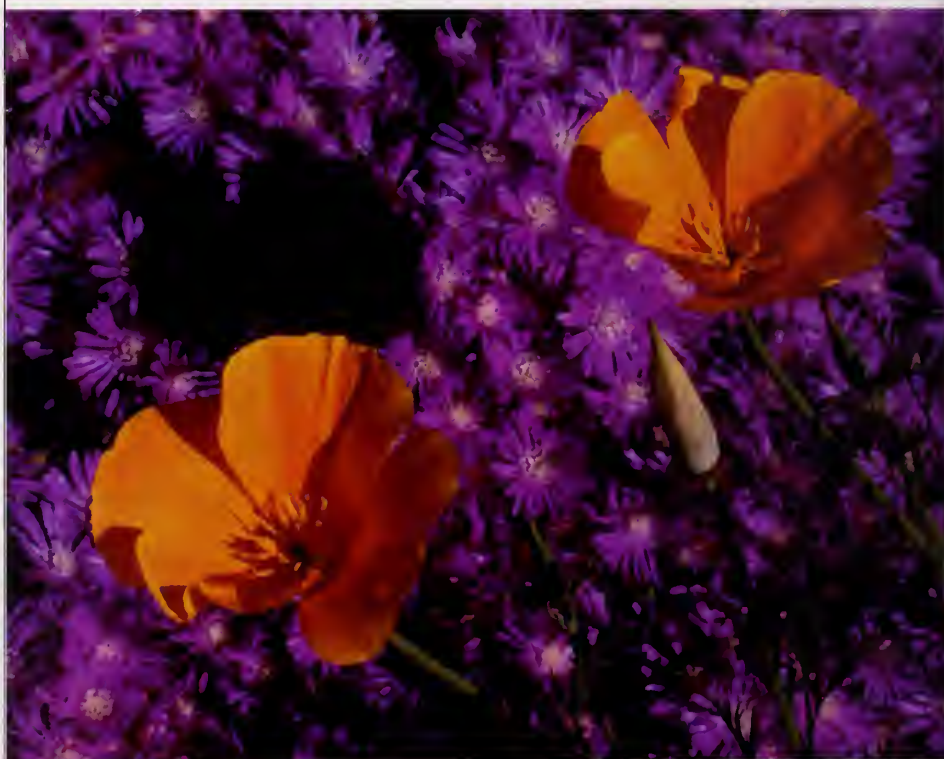
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BACKYARD

A Real Gardener's Show

A Look at the upcoming Philadelphia Harvest Show

By John Gannon

The drought of 1999 brings to mind a tale from Greek mythology. Persephone, while gathering flowers in the Vale of Nysa, was seized by Hades and brought to the underworld. Her mother, Demeter, the goddess of agriculture, fell into such a state

artistic competitions, as well as gardening "how-to" and craft demonstrations, the third annual Great Pumpkin Pie Contest, and an open-air farmers' marketplace. Youth activities will include scarecrow making and pumpkin painting, along with com-

petitions for the best vegetables, annuals, perennials, container gardens, and more.

From near and far, gardeners come to the Show, bringing with them their prize plants, veggies, and foodstuffs. For the past nine years, Stephen Clarke has entered his homegrown vegetables in a range of classes at the Philadelphia

"The gourd was so big that we took it on a road trip to Buffalo, New York, so that experts from the World Pumpkin Confederation (yes, they really do exist) could officially confirm its size," he notes, proudly.

Reminiscing about the Philadelphia Harvest Show, Clarke echoed the thoughts of many gardeners, who not only get a thrill from the Show's competitive nature, but from the efforts of their peers. All agree that showcasing their harvests is not an isolated exercise, but a communal experience. "Year after year, I'm always learning something new," Clarke said. "For instance, the basket arrangements for vegetables are always very competitive. There's a lot of artistry at work, and I'm always picking up new design and gardening ideas. If you want to meet other area gardeners, this is the place to be."

With his mastery of the gourd now mythically entrenched in vegetable lore, Clarke has turned to growing a "very large" pumpkin. How big, we ask? "Very big," he says, smiling.

Perhaps Demeter will again look with kind eyes on his patient labors. 🍂



Clarke and one of his blue-ribbon entries.

of deep misery that she became unconcerned with the earth's harvest, resulting in an outbreak of widespread famine.

Last summer, one might have argued that Demeter was again fretting over her missing daughter, as the drought seemed to threaten the bounty of the Philadelphia Harvest Show, an exciting annual event put on by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Miraculously, area gardeners gathered over 2,500 entries for hundreds of competitive categories in spite of the heat and dry weather. This year's Show, *Harvest 2000...and Beyond*, promises to further the success of the previous year, preferably...without the drought!

Being held in beautiful Fairmount Park on the weekend of September 16th and 17th (*save these dates*), the upcoming Harvest Show will feature horticultural and

Harvest Show. Last year, his garden yielded 36 blue ribbons for everything from eggplants and tomatoes, to baskets of peppers and gourds of numerous varieties.

Clarke and his eight siblings were introduced to gardening, not by choice, but under orders from their father, a master of reverse psychology who "persuaded" them to tend the family soil. As Clarke recalled, "At the time we hated it, but now of course we're all enthusiastic gardeners." In his first year at the Show, he submitted 10 entries and won the Award for Horticultural Excellence, providing additional motivation to expand his gardening palette.

Clarke has always had an interest in growing "the big things," and two years ago he somehow managed to grow a gourd that measured an astonishing eight feet in length—one of the largest ever produced on the planet.

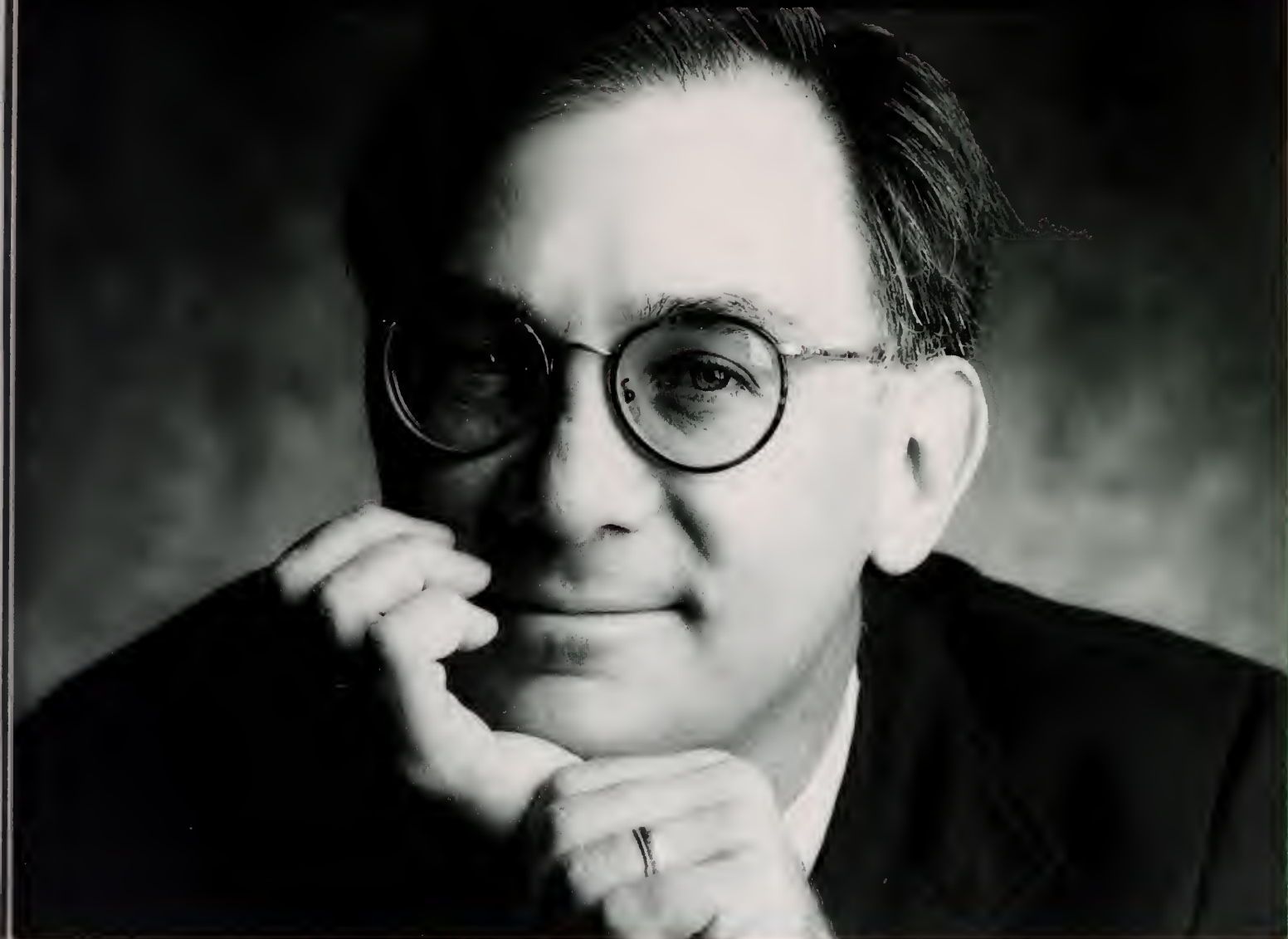
John Gannon is project manager of Research and Documentation for the Philadelphia Green program of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. This is his first *Green Scene* article.

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Our full time Director and Horticulturist has planned a year-round program of events for Garden Club members with classes and workshops that will be of interest to both experienced and novice gardeners.

Resident Garden Club members, who will pay a nominal membership fee, will have the opportunity to attend classes and seminars given by our Director as well as by other prominent Philadelphia horticulturists. National and international plant experts will also be invited to give seminars when visiting Philadelphia.

To the avid gardener, for whom there are no seasons, the ultimate enjoyment is having a greenhouse in which to grow plants year-round.

The lifestyle of Cathedral Village encourages this Philadelphia tradition that continues to grow.

Why not follow tradition! Move to Cathedral Village and become an active Garden Club Member.

The William H. Sayre Horticultural Center is dedicated in memory of William H. Sayre, Founding Board Member, who contributed twenty-three years of volunteer service as a former Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer of the Board of Directors.

Contents

6 The Potting Shed

FEATURES

12 Cool Camellias?

Until recently, the thought of growing camellias—that Southern garden favorite—in the Delaware Valley seemed impossible. But with recent breeding breakthroughs, the idea of a truly cold-hardy camellia is coming closer to reality every year. Here, Scott Appell gives us an update, as well as presenting several relatively tough plants you can test in your own garden.

18 Harvest Arranging

Why only arrange flowers and foliage? In this article, Eva Monheim cleverly integrates vegetables from the garden into her creations, adding new elements of color, shape, and texture. You'll never look at a pepper the same way again.

22 The Gold Standard

Here, Sheila Gmeiner unveils the winners of the 2001 Gold Medal Plant Awards, given each year by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. All are great woody plants that deserve a place on our properties and in public spaces.

28 Tree Farms

What can city residents do with vacant lots in the city? As Pamela Vu reports, one solution is to start a tree farm. These farms serve many purposes, from growing trees to plant on city streets to providing a means for residents to join together on a common gardening project. Indeed, they give new meaning to the concept of an "urban forest."

NEW!

COLUMNS

34 The Passionate Perennialist

by Beverly Fitts

36 Tool Tales

by Adam Levine

37 Uncommon Groundcovers

by Patricia A. Taylor

38 Classified ads

40 Backyard

In search of the perfect *Amaryllis*

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society motivates people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

Cover Photo by Jon Cox

GREENscene

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Starting with this issue, *Green Scene* is pleased to launch a new section of gardening columns. The purpose of these columns is to provide you with highly specialized information, ranging from interesting plant profiles to useful “how-to” pieces. For our first round of columnists, I’d like to welcome gardening experts Beverly Fitts, Patricia

like a telescoping 10-foot tree saw or heavy-duty maul.

A quick canvassing of the PHS staff revealed interesting tool preferences, as well. President Jane Pepper opts for a ratchet pruner, noting, “It’s the perfect tool for small people who want to tackle big jobs.” Executive vice president (and sometime seashore gardener) Blaine

Tools of the Trade

A. Taylor, and Adam Levine. Beverly will share her plant expertise in “The Passionate Perennialist,” while Patricia will delve into the arcane world of “Uncommon Groundcovers.” Finally, Adam will give us a nuts ’n’ bolts view of important gardening implements in “Tool Tales.”

Speaking of tools, this last item gives me a chance to reflect on my own relationship with garden tools. Like many things in life, we often don’t give as much thought to our garden tools as we should, though they are indispensable to the process. Nevertheless, everyone has a favorite tool. A perfect shovel, an excellent rake or some other relative oddball,

Bonham prefers one of the newer hose nozzles that allows him to “dial in” different water-spray settings. Public Landscapes project manager Nancy O’Donnell is partial to her “very-sharp Japanese folding saw, which cuts through anything like butter and helps turn my jungle back into a garden each spring.” And from the “Ask A Gardener” hotline desk (see page 9), volunteer Alice Doering praises her 6-foot-long pruner, “which is great for trimming the espaliered plants around the house.”

Although I have lots of tools sloppily strewn about my shed (neatness has never been my forté), my favorite tool is the...lawnmower. I know it’s a terribly

un-P.C. confession to make in this day and age, but it’s true. As editor of a venerable garden journal, I suppose my preferred tool should be some elegant, hand-forged spade, but actually, I prefer my old Toro 2.5 horsepower mower.

The reason I love my lawnmower as a garden tool is a simple one. No matter how weedy my garden gets in summer, I can’t think of another device that can so quickly and resolutely make it look better. Indeed, a 10-minute job of mowing the grass makes each flower bed literally pop out of the ground and grab the eye. It’s as close to garden magic as I’ve ever witnessed. True, my Toro is a noisy and stinky machine, but it’s also fast, efficient, and makes my garden look presentable again (provided, of course, you don’t get close enough to notice all those weeds).

This is not to say that I don’t own and treasure a thin, elegant English spade or keep non-exhaust-spewing tools in the shed (someday, I’ll wax philosophic about my fearsome bow saw), but the mower is what comes to mind when I think of a great garden tool. Of course, the larger point here is that tools make us better gardeners and make our gardens look better for the effort. We should also—despite my shameless example—take good care of our tools, keeping them clean, neatly placed on hooks or shelves, and primed for the next big job.

For more on tools, I refer you back to Adam’s new column, as well as the other instructional columns debuting in this issue. From each, we are bound to learn more about the nooks and crannies of the horticultural universe. Like good tools, they will serve to make us better gardeners.

Pete Prown
greenscene@pennhort.org



Pete Prown



A Little Gem: *Tulipa tarda*

This fall, add something different to your bulb shopping list—diminutive and graceful species tulips. Unlike hybrid tulips, species grow naturally in the wild. Many are true perennials, returning each year. One of the most charming and easy to grow is *Tulipa tarda*. In 1997, the International Flower Bulb Center in the Netherlands chose *T. tarda* “Bulb of the Year” for its good looks and garden merit.

Tulipa tarda (syn. *T. dasystemon*) is native to the dry, rocky hillsides of Turkestan in central Asia. It seems equal-

ly at home in our North American gardens. Hardy from Zones 3 through 8, it grows 4 to 6 inches tall and is well-suited to a rock-garden planting or for naturalizing in a woodland setting.

In mid-spring, each bulb produces clusters of up to six flowers on sturdy stems. When fully open, the blossoms are flat, star-shaped, and bright golden yellow with a creamy-white margin at the tip of each petal. “When the sun shines on *Tulipa tarda*, it’s a knockout,” says Lee Raden, a rock gardener and long-time veteran of the Philadelphia

Flower Show. He enjoys the bright flowers all by themselves or when partnered with blue-flowering plants.

Becky Heath, co-owner of Brent and Becky’s Bulbs, explains that in the early morning or on cloudy days, the blossoms remain closed, displaying an attractive, brownish purple exterior. “One of the best things about these tulips is that they are like two different flowers,” she says.

When happy with its location, *T. tarda* will multiply rapidly and flower generously. Choose a well-drained site where the bulbs will remain dry during their dormant period in summer and avoid planting them near aggressive, matting perennials, which can crowd out the small bulbs.

Raden emphasizes the importance of planting species tulips in early autumn to allow them time to develop strong roots. Place *T. tarda* bulbs approximately 4 to 5 inches deep. Sprinkle bulb fertilizer or composted cow manure on top of the soil (not in the planting hole) and water well. Fertilize the bulbs again each fall or when shoots first appear in early spring. Remove spent flowers, but allow the leaves to die back naturally. The maturing foliage of *Tulipa tarda* will provide food for the bulbs and maximize next year’s show.

—Debbie Moran

Debbie Moran gardens and writes in New York state.

SOURCES:

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A Man of Many Gardens

By Pamela Vu

"I was planting perennials at 52nd & Columbia Streets, where there's a huge mural on the brick wall behind the garden, and I had to cross the street to turn on the water," recalls city gardener, James Stanley. "On my way back, some-

one from the neighborhood stopped to see how I was doing. Seconds later, I saw the mural collapse onto my garden. If I hadn't run into my friend, I don't know what would have happened to me."

Fortunately, as fate would have it, James Stanley was meant to garden. His 6-foot-tall linebacker build belies the gentle gardener within, a man whose undeniable love for gardening has materialized into four luscious community gardens. He's even won first place for his garden at 52nd and Parkside Avenue in the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's City Gardens Contest several years back.

If anyone knows how to create works of beauty from scratch, it would be James. As the owner of S-Kids Autobody, he is used to transforming car wrecks into sparkling new vehicles. He's just as good at transforming bare land. On a narrow stretch of ground between his shop and home, he built his first garden, which he calls his "Tropical Garden." Planted here are elephant ears and hosta, among other variegated plants. And his garden oasis at 52nd & Parkside is replete with ponds, vegetable plots, annuals, and a sitting area bordered with four columns.

"I'm originally from Georgia and moved to Philadelphia in my twenties," says James. "I grew up on a farm with my six sisters and three brothers. So from the start, I've always enjoyed working with the earth."

Shortly after his near-fatal experience with the falling mural, the city came and helped remove the debris that had fallen on his garden. He further vows to restore the destroyed garden to its previous state. These days, James is back working in his many gardens in West Philly, planting hibiscus, black-eyed Susans, daylilies, crape myrtle, and more. Putting the incident behind him, he is content knowing that "it just wasn't my time...plus there's still a lot more gardening to do."



LOSING LOOSESTRIFE. These days, most serious gardeners know the concerns over **purple loosestrife**. As our story on invasives in the May 2000 issue noted, loosestrife is a true menace in wetlands, choking out native plants by the mile. While it's not illegal to sell loosestrife, the plant is on Pennsylvania's "Noxious Weed Control List" and therefore hardly the wisest choice for retail sale. Unfortunately, not every nursery has gotten the message and various outlets in the Philadelphia area are still selling this purple peril.

During a recent visit to a Frank's Nursery, for example, we found the national garden chain selling *Lythrum salicaria* 'Robert'. And in another Frank's, we saw the closely related *L. virgatum* 'Dropmore Purple'. If these discoveries weren't troubling enough, the tags on each plant incredibly advise the buyer to use loosestrife "for back-grounds, naturalizing...and wet areas."

Comments Dr. Ann F. Rhoads of the Morris Arboretum, "At one time, it was thought that loosestrife's cultivars were sterile, but it has been shown that they cross-pollinate with naturalized populations and produce viable seed." In the future, one hopes that all retail nurseries will drop loosestrife from their plant lines and sell only non-invasive perennials.



BEAUTY AND THE BOOK. No matter if you're a professional landscape designer or an amateur with grand dreams, Penelope Hobhouse's latest book, **Garden Style** (Willow Creek Press, hardcover, 216 pp., \$35), will thoroughly dazzle the eye and inform

continued

The Gardener's Bookshelf

Enduring Roots: Encounters with Trees, History, and the American Landscape

By Gayle Brandow Samuels
(Rutgers University Press, 193 pp.,
hardcover, \$25)

Level: All levels

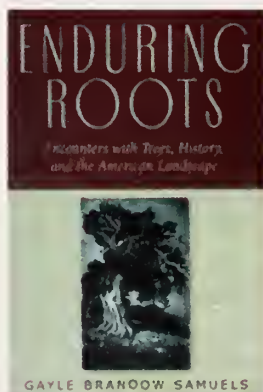
Pros: Pleasant, sensitive prose
combined with interesting historical
and scientific information

Cons: None

Enduring Roots rediscovers the history of America through its trees, as "unimpeachable witnesses" of human endeavor. Samuels takes a historical look at pines, sycamores, oaks, cottonwoods and other native species (as well as fruit trees and those planted as memorials), highlighting singular trees or species and then discussing each in its cultural context. For example, the tale of Connecticut's venerable Charter Oak affords us a peek into colonial history, while a glimpse at Johnny "Applesseed" Chapman and his apple trees recalls the generosity and free spirit of post-colonial America.

Most poignant are Samuels' reflections on the California bristlecone pine (*Pinus longaeva*), which are among the oldest living beings on the planet—some are over 4,500 years old. She writes, "We plant trees to mark the happy days and the sad ones, to make a home, feed a family, and just to glory in their astounding beauty. Each one is a legacy, a gift of transformative power in life and of enduring beauty in death."

—Laurie
Fitzpatrick



Taylor's Master Guide to Landscaping

By Rita Buchanan (Houghton
Mifflin, 372 pp., hardcover, \$40)

Level: All Levels

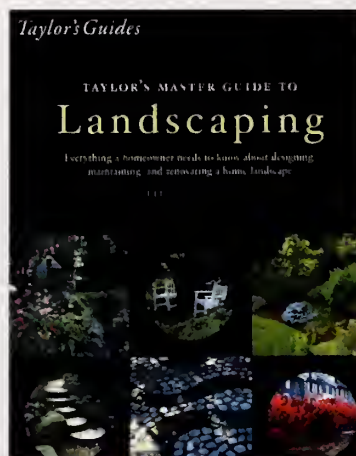
Pros: Excellent reference

Cons: None

This is a fine guide for the homeowner who wants to make the most of his or her surroundings. It has everything you need to plan and implement a landscape that suits your own likes and lifestyle. Other garden guides instruct readers how to achieve a specific visual style, but this informative and practical book begins by helping them discover their own.

The first four chapters explain how to match one's grounds and garden needs. The rest of the book details all the garden elements from plants to paving to pools. A true reference, this is a book you could live with for years and still discover new ideas. The format allows the reader to dip in for a short primer, or hang around for the full story. It's filled with excellent principles that ordinarily elude the non-professional. Clearly, this book was written by an expert, and her depth of knowledge and experience are evident on every page.

—Nancy Q. O'Donnell



the mind. Throughout this comprehensive text, Hobhouse discusses many topics, such as structure, creating a "natural" look, and how to relate a garden to its larger setting. Better yet, there are over 250 glorious, color photographs, including lush images of Great Dixter, Thomas Church's San Francisco garden, and a courtyard garden in Bruges, Belgium. In all, a great addition to any design-lover's library. (Hot tip: Penelope Hobhouse will be designing a major garden exhibit at the 2001 Philadelphia Flower Show next March. Don't miss it!)



BULB HUNTING ONLINE. It's the first fall of the 21st century and you feel obligated to buy some of this year's bulbs in cyberspace. Where do you turn? Try the following four websites, each of which will give you clues as to where to find great tulips, daffodils, and more:

Mailorder Gardening Association

(www.mailordergardening.com): This non-profit site contains plenty of tips for online shoppers, as well as links to numerous catalogs.

National Gardening Association

(www.garden.org): Here you'll find a Buyer's Guide directory of mail-order gardening companies. You can search for products by keyword or choose from popular bulb and plant categories.

Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center

(www.bulb.com): The U.S. press office of the Dutch flower-bulb industry, this site contains extensive resources devoted to flower bulbs.

GardenNet

(www.gardenet.com): GardenNet's "Catalog Request Service" is available to visitors free of charge. Just place a check



ASK A GARDENER

by Hotline Volunteers



Ornamental grasses at Wave Hill in the Bronx, New York.

In my one-year-old garden, I put in ornamental grasses that have not grown very tall. When and how much should I trim them for next year? Also, I winterized my young rosebushes by spraying dormant spray and covering them with 6-8 inches mulch above the knot. Do I need to water them at all during the winter (say on a warm day)? How are they getting moisture?

Kathleen Wise, Chadds Ford, PA

The grasses should be cut in late February or early March (or earlier if they begin to flop). Trim them down to roughly 6 inches off the ground. The roses do not need to be watered, as they are getting enough moisture from rain or snow. Also, you don't really need to spray dormant oil on roses, either. Mulch is all that is necessary.

This fall, a friend offered to deliver fresh horse manure to use in my garden. What are the drawbacks to accepting this offer? How do I change it to compost? Also, should I mix it with ground-up leaves?

Beverly Barnett,
location unknown

Horse manure is a wonderful gift...once it has aged. If it is truly fresh, it will be full of grass and weed seeds, which could germinate in your garden. It will take nearly a year to decay into compost, provided you turn it often. It can be mixed with leaves or your own weeds, again turning often. Hopefully, you will not get such a large quantity that it will be hard to handle. We suggest working with one wheelbarrow load at a time for easy handling.

I would like to get some information on how to dry and/or preserve Osage oranges and pomegranates. I want to use them for holiday displays.

I. Sternberg, West Chester, PA

To dry pomegranates (*Punica granatum*) and Osage oranges (*Maclura pomifera*), place in an oven set at 200°F, which will allow them to dry very slowly. You can also dry thin slices of Osage orange in the oven. The interior patterns of the Osage orange are very decorative. This can be enhanced with thin coatings of silver or gold spray paint.

Do you have a question for our garden experts? If so, contact PHS's Horticultural Hotline in the McLean Library, which is open Monday-Friday, 9:30 -noon. Phone (215) 988-8777; fax (215) 988-8783; email: askagardener@pennhort.org.

next to the catalog you would like, then press the "Send My Request" button. GardenNet will receive your catalog requests and pass them on to the appropriate firms for you.

MAKING HER MARK. Congratulations to *Green Scene* contributor and well-known horticulturist **Stephanie Cohen**, who has been named the recipient of the "2000 Garden Communicator of the Year Award" from the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA). The award goes to the writer who has made outstanding contributions to the public appreciation of gardening and landscaping through print or broadcast journalism.



If that weren't enough, plant wholesaler Barry Glick of Sunshine Farm & Gardens has just named a perennial after Stephanie. Named, as he puts it, "in honor of my vertically challenged, yet incredibly dynamic friend" (Stephanie stands a mighty 4-feet, 11-inches tall), the late-blooming miniature, *Campanula* 'Dwarf Tornado', features a deep-blue flower that he says lasts for weeks. For more information on this special cultivar, visit www.sunfarm.com on the Internet.

TEAMING UP. Mail-order giant **W. Atlee Burpee & Co.** has recently merged with **Heronswood Nursery**, one of the nation's best-known specialty nurseries. Co-founded by famed plant-hunter Dan Hinkley, Heronswood is known for its vast inventory of unusual trees, shrubs, vines, and herbaceous perennials from around the globe. Notes Hinkley, "Partnering with Burpee allows my collection efforts to double. Together, we will help satisfy America's increasingly sophisticated plant palette."

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NORTHERN LIGHTS

Gardening with Camellias in Cold Climates



Northern gardeners have long envied their southern counterparts who are able to grow camellias at whim. And with good reason, too—camellias have an alluring, enchanting quality and their magnificent flowers conjure up images of grand plantation-style gardens in the Deep South.

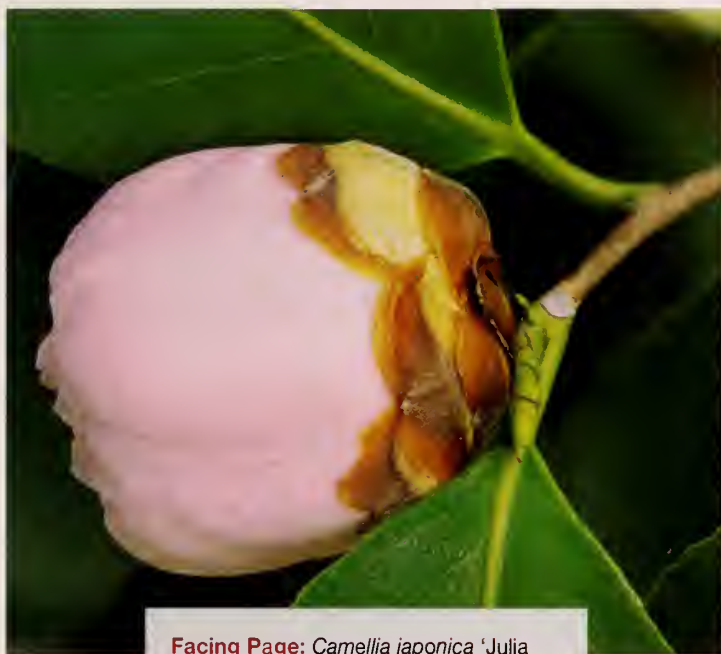
While many up north have resigned themselves to growing camellias in greenhouses, several species indigenous to the mountains of China and the islands of Japan are perfect candidates for Zone 7 and, with proper winter care, possibly Zone 6. Thanks to an intensive regimen of selective breeding and garden trials, these hardier camellia cultivars are becoming available for northerners to plant and admire for hours on end.

CAMELLIA LORE

There are approximately 267 species of the genus *Camellia*, which was named in honor of Georg Joseph Kamel (1661-1706), a respected botanist and Moravian Jesuit missionary who lived and worked in the Philippines. As a group, camellias occur naturally over a surprisingly large swath of southeast Asia, China, Japan, and westward to Myanmar (Burma) and Assam. They belong to the tea family (*Theaceae*) and have such garden-worthy New World cousins as *Franklinia* and *Stewartia*.

The first camellia to arrive in the United States was a single red *Camellia japonica*, which arrived in New Jersey from England, c.1797-98. It was imported by a New York state nurseryman named Michael Floy, who added a double white camellia in 1800, possibly *C. japonica* 'Alba Plena'. Today, amazingly, there are about 50,000 registered cultivars.

All camellias are broad-leaved evergreens that may range from 4 to 20 feet tall, depending upon cultivar and age. Their foliage—which is leathery in texture and a lustrous dark



Facing Page: *Camellia japonica* 'Julia Drayton' is an heirloom cultivar dating to 1840 (from Europe). It bears 5 to 6-inch (or larger) deep-crimson flowers and forms a compact, but upright shrub.

Above: *Camellia japonica* 'Otome' (syn. 'Pink Perfection') bears 3-inch double flowers in shell pink. An heirloom selection dating to 1875 (from Japan), it has a vigorous upright growth habit.

green—makes a handsome background for the flowers, which generally range from 2 to 7 inches across. Most are restricted to higher USDA Zones (frost free) or greenhouse culture. *Camellia japonica*, from Japan and Korea, was once considered to be the hardiest of the group, but many are vigorous only to Zones 8-9, limiting their use in northern gardens. However, with new hybridization programs afoot, outdoor camellia culture is steadily moving northward.

FOUR HARDY SPECIES

Cool-weather camellias are divided into two blooming seasons. First are the fall-blooming (October-November) species, which include *Camellia sasanqua*, *C. oleifera*, and *C. sinensis*. Then there is the spring-blooming (March-May) species, *C. japonica*. The off-peak flowering periods of these camellias make them especially garden worthy; better

still, their blossoms are stunning to behold, with seemingly infinite variations of form and color, particularly among warm-climate ones. Alas, hardy camellias are rarely fragrant.

NORTHERN LIGHTS



Above: Recognized since 1695, *Camellia japonica* 'Kumasaka' is an archival selection that is one of the hardiest japonica cultivars. The rose-pink flowers are 3-inches in diameter and bloom profusely. It has a compact, upright habit.

These splendid shrubs have a wide range of landscape uses in both Asian and western garden designs: as a specimen, in mixed shrub borders and massed plantings, or as a wonderful alternative to mundane foundation displays. In fact, hardy camellias fare exceptionally well when planted against a warm wall with a northern or western exposure. However, do avoid an eastern-facing direction: the dew-laden leaves and flowers must dry out completely before the morning sun hits them. Otherwise fungal problems may prevail.

Native to the islands of southern Japan, fall-blooming *Camellia sasanqua* can be cultivated in Zone 7. This has been extensively crossed with the equally sturdy northern Chinese *Camellia oleifera* to create some remarkably resilient cultivars, reliable at least to Zone 6. Currently, Longwood Gardens

in Kennett Square, PA is doing extensive trialing with several species of hardy camellias. [See sidebar on pg. 17 for more information.]

Among the hybridized cultivars of *C. oleifera* one can purchase from many nurseries nationwide are 'Polar Ice', 'Snow Flurry', the lavender-colored 'Winter's Star', 'Winter's Hope', 'Winter's Rose', and the deep pink 'Winter's Charm'. You can see many of these fall-blooming camellias at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. These were originally bred under the auspices of Dr. William Ackerman, a pioneer in the sphere of hardy camellias.

Spring-flowering *Camellia japonica* has a number of good cultivars bred by Dr. Clifford Parks of the University of North Carolina. Among these are 'April Blush', 'April Dawn', and 'April Kiss'. If you live in the southern reaches of the Mid-Atlantic, there are several good variegated cultivars worth tracking down, as well. Among these are *C. japonica* 'Kaijin' ("Beautiful Woman"), which is an outstanding yellow-margined mutation from Japan, and 'Guilio Nucci', a salmon-pink selection with yellow-splashed foliage.

Finally, few people realize the landscape value and hardiness of the tea plant, *Camellia sinensis*. This October-blooming species, which produces copious 1-inch white single flowers, is hardy to USDA Zone 6b with winter screening. Under ideal conditions, they may attain a height of 6 feet. To observe a local example, go to the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania (located in Chestnut Hill, PA) to see a specimen of *C. sinensis* that has reached 47 years of age—an impressive feat for our region. For more color, the cultivar 'Rose' (a.k.a. 'Beni Bana Cha') has pink flowers and reddish new growth. It can be cultivated as far north as USDA Zone 7, preferably with a seasonal screen.

SOURCES

Camellia Forest Nursery
(catalog \$2)
125 Carolina Forest Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 962-6944
info@camforest.com

Fairweather Gardens
(catalog \$4)
P.O. Box 330
Greenwich, NJ 08323
(856) 451-6261
fax (856) 451-0303

Heronswood Nursery
(catalog \$8)
7530 NE 288th St.
Kingston, WA 98346
(360) 297-4172
www.heronswood.com

Nuccio's Nurseries
(free catalog)
3555 Chaney Trail
Altadena, CA 91003
(626) 794-3383

CAMELLIA SOCIETIES

American Camellia Society
100 Masee Lane
Fort Valley, GA 31030
(912) 967-2722

International Camellia Society
PO Box 750
Brookhaven, MS 39601-0750
(601) 833-7351
www.med-rz.unisb.de/med_fak/physiol2/camellia/home.htm



A NORTHERN CAMELLIA GARDEN

Camellia-ophile Rev. James B. Jeffrey ("Jim" to his gardening friends), past president of the Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons and current vice president of the American Delphinium Society, has been cultivating camellias in his Long Island garden for the past 15 years. Hailing from Louisiana, he remembers camellias from his childhood and was surprised to find a small specimen on his newly purchased property. To his amazement, the young, single-white flowers of this unidentified cultivar survived the often mild Long Island winters unprotected (that serendipitous camellia is now 30 years old and 12 feet tall, he notes). Thus began his current love with the genus' cold-hardy members.

To grow winter-hardy camellias, Jim offers the following simple advice:

Above: Rev. James B. Jeffrey stands next to a healthy specimen of *Camellia japonica* 'Julia Drayton' in his Long Island garden.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Camellia japonica 'Carter's Sunburst' was introduced by California camellia hybridist E.H. Carter in 1951. This selection produces 3-1/2 to 4 inch, pink-striped flowers that vary between semi-double, peony-form, and formal-double configurations.



"You'll want a partially shaded site, especially in areas with hot summers, because strong sun may burn the foliage and bleach out the flowers. The soil should be moist, water-retentive (but not soggy), rich in organic matter and have a pH of around 6.5." Incidentally, composted pine needles, oak leaves, coffee grounds, or tea bags added to the upper level of the planting hole will aid in lowering the pH value. "An annual spring application of Holly-tone can be helpful," he adds, or you can use your favorite acidifying granular or water-soluble fertilizer.

Although Jim Jeffrey admits to never

winterizing his newly planted 1- to 3-year-old camellias, the following recommendations are still worth noting: Winter protection may include a temporary seasonal windscreen of burlap supported by wooden two-by-twos or thick bamboo poles, each cut to height of the shrub. For newly planted or young specimens, the gap between the foliage and the burlap can be filled with dry straw, forming an insulating cushion of air. This is removed in early spring. A winter-mulching, however, proves to be deleterious to the root system (doing so causes root rot and retention of too much moisture) and should be avoided.

As for pests, Jim notes, "All camellias, including hardy ones, are subject to attack by tea and camellia scale, peony scale, spider mites when it's hot and dry, and aphids on new growth, but they are by and large insect- and disease-free." The most debilitating pathogens include fungal flower or petal blight in areas where summers are hot and humid, and a viral flower blight for which there is no cure. To help prevent these distressing maladies, Jim removes spent flowers from the ground and disposes of them in the trash—not on the compost pile. The mulch should be periodically replaced, too (ditto for disposal).

A CAMELLIA FOR YOU?

With exquisiteness of color, texture, and form, and uniqueness of bloom period, camellias have endured for centuries in our collective hearts and gardens. Truly, it seems they will seduce us forever. Fortunately, with the ascent of these new hardier varieties, we're getting to enjoy them more often outside of a greenhouse. While breeders are still in search of a fully hardy camellia for Zone 6, these latest cultivars are reason enough for us northern gardeners to rejoice and try planting at least one in our gardens. 🌸

Scott D. Appell is the director of education for the Horticultural Society of New York. He wrote an article on ornamental fruit for the garden in the May 1999 issue. Scott is a member of the PHS Publications Committee.

Thanks to the following for their help with this story: Bill Thomas, Chuck Taylor, Jim Jeffrey, Susan A. Roth, and Stephanie Massey.

Further Reading

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Phillips, Roger and Rix, Martin. *The Random House Book of Indoor and Greenhouse Plants (Volume I)*. Random House. New York, NY. 1997.

Poor, Janet Meakin and Brewster, Nancy Peterson. *The Garden Club of America Plants that Merit Attention Volume II: Shrubs*. Timber Press. Portland, OR. 1996.

Trehane, Jennifer. *Camellias: The Complete Guide to Their Cultivation and Use*. Timber Press. Portland, OR. 1998.



Horry Kolish

Longwood's Search for a Hardy Camellia

by R. William Thomas

What defines a hardy camellia? Is it one that survives without winter damage for two years? Ten years? Fifty years? The camellias being touted today as "hardy" were not growing in Delaware Valley gardens during our last really cold winters of the late 1970s, so we don't know if they are truly hardy. In fact, it may be a number of years before a cold winter fully tests these plants.

Longwood Gardens has set out to find a hardy camellia that will not need protection or pampering in USDA Zone 6. The camellia that meets this goal will be as tough as an American holly; in other words, able to grow in sun or shade, in wind as well as in a protected location. Four test plots, each located in full sun, are being planted with camellia seedlings, hybrids, and selections. Laboratory freezing studies will start next year to eliminate waiting for a naturally cold winter.

Multiple approaches are being used to find plants to trial. From nurseries, we are buying every cultivar that sports hardiness claims. Beyond that, we are cooperating with hybridizers and supporting individuals who are collecting wild camellia seeds, cuttings, and pollen. Seedlings of Korean *Camellia japonica* show great promise among wild collections. These seeds were collected on islands off the northwestern coast of South Korea, near the North Korean border.

We are testing *C. oleifera*, one of the most common camellias in China (see photo above). We have seedlings from a number of sources and are testing their winter hardiness. The high elevation species *C. tenuivalvis* and *C. chekiangoleosa* are also being planted. These offer excellent potential for surviving cold weather, if they can tolerate the heat of our summers. We are also hybridizing these high elevation plants with *C. japonica* and *C. oleifera*.

Dr. William Ackerman (formerly with the U.S. National Arboretum) and Dr. Clifford Parks (University of North Carolina) developed most of the hybrids being tested. Most of Ackerman's hybrids have *C. oleifera* and *C. sasanqua* in their parentage and bloom in late autumn, their advantage being that the flower buds do not need to survive the winter. Park's hybrids, meanwhile, are primarily winter and spring blooming.

As promising plants are identified, they will be propagated and tested at other sites. We won't know for some time if a fully hardy camellia has been found. In the meantime, you can conduct your own trials with the hardier selections that are currently available at nurseries.

R. William Thomas is research horticulturist at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA.

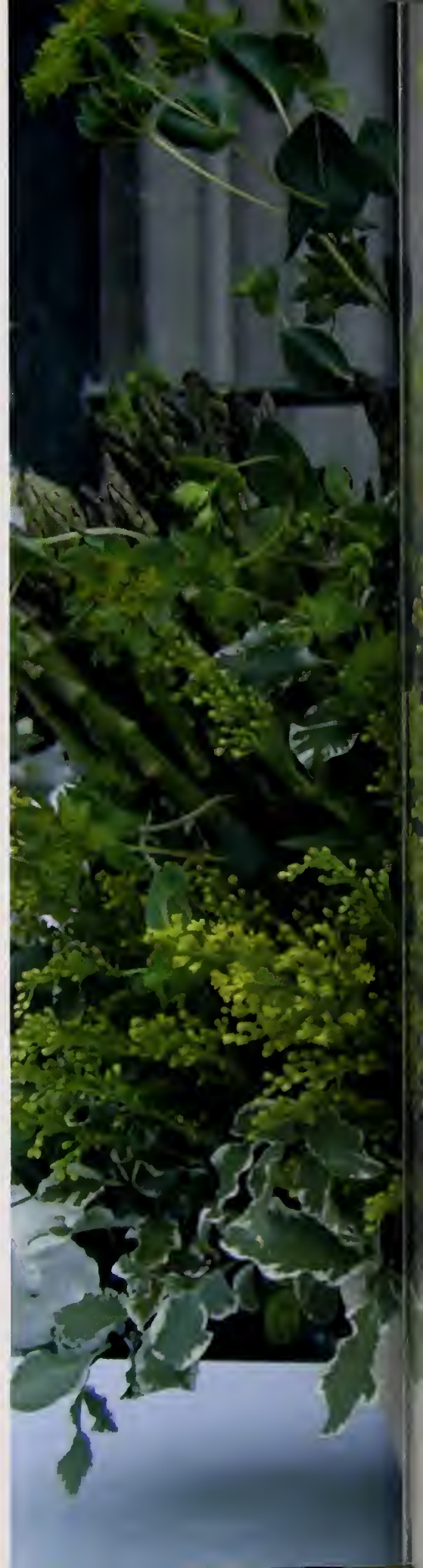
Right: Fruit and vegetable arrangements can be more formal by creating monochromatic designs in a ceramic or crystal container. This style arrangement enables the creator to concentrate on line, texture, and shape, rather than on color combinations.

Arranging the **HARVEST**

**New Ideas for the
Autumnal Flower Arranger**

Story by Eva Monheim • Photography by Jon Cox

When the late-summer and fall crops of fruits and vegetables start to come in from the garden in great abundance, even the best of gardeners can feel overwhelmed. These delectable delights lead to many action-packed days of harvesting and preserving the bounty: canning, cooking, freezing, baking, and grilling. When all the work is done, the finished products transform into *manna* on cold winter nights, making all the work well worthwhile. What is lost, however, are the shapes of vegetables and fruit in their original, natural form. We can pay tribute to the fresh, sumptuous fruits and vegetables by glorifying them in table designs. Whether at the height of the season or purchased at the market in the dead of winter, fruits, and vegetables can take their rightful place at the dining table as the main attraction. How? By using them in the creation of a beautiful centerpiece.







One of my favorite designs is the pepper arrangement. The container may be one pepper or a bunch of peppers, depending on how large of an arrangement you chose to make. With the large number of varieties of peppers available through seed catalogues and in produce markets, peppers can be used as an integral part of table décor.

In the fall, I enjoy making designs with orange and yellow peppers filled with stems of miniature peppers, goldenrod (*Solidago*), roses, rose hips, berries, and other cut flowers that will dry well. These products require less water and stay fresher looking in the arrangement.

When was the last time the potato was paid homage to, other than mashed, fried, or baked? When was the last time you made a pepper and broccoli arrangement for your dinner party guests to admire? Likely never. But we can be Promethean in our decorative approach to our fruits and vegetables, creating conversation pieces that guests will long remember.

Instead of merely being viewed as potential side dishes, they can become vessels of adoration. Cut open, split apart, husked, cored and peeled, the fruits and vegetables take on a whole new look in my arrangements. The tomato becomes as important as a rose; the pepper shares the stage with prized china; the pumpkin transforms into a golden tureen; and the cauliflower becomes the diva who flaunts her full figure on the operatic stage. It is as though the vegetables and fruits go to the ball and are transformed into Cinderella. More importantly, these arrangements provide endless combinations of visual appeal, besides being easy to create. Everything is left to the imagination.

Bumper crops of zucchini are no longer the laughing stock of their unintentional proliferation. By linking zucchinis together, a long table arrangement can be made by filling each zucchini

with flowers that dry beautifully. These include *Limonium* of all sorts (statice, sea lavender), *Solidago*, *Gypsophila*, and *Lunaria*, all of which look beautiful tucked into the body of the zucchini. Open a tiny slit the length of the zucchini to insert the stems. The spongy inside of the vegetable provides enough moisture for the flowers to remain fresh long after the dinner party is over.

To make a container out of a pepper, carefully cut around the top of the pepper and twist off the top. But don't throw the top away—heavens no. After filling the hollow pepper with a small piece of Oasis, put a floral wooden pick up through the stem end of the top of the pepper and insert it into the foam. The pepper top becomes inverted to expose a treasure-trove of seeds that provides added interest to the overall arrangement. The seeds now become an integral part of the design, adding texture and a soft inner color that is not usually seen.

Plump, radiant cherry tomatoes can be added to an arrangement, stems and all. A taped or covered wire wrapped around the stems of the clusters of cherry tomatoes can be put into an arrangement with wooden picks. This creates a cascade effect down the side of a container. (Attach grapes in a similar manner.)

To arrange with smooth, blushing apples, use a floral wooden pick to skew-

er the apple through the blossom end. This creates little injury to the apple and allows the apple to last weeks in an arrangement. When selecting apples, pick an apple that is on the drier side. (Juicer apple varieties spoil quicker.) Granny Smith, Red Delicious, and Golden Delicious are the best examples of apples for arranging. This selection of apples also provides a wider range of colors to work with.

One of the great advantages of fruit and vegetable arrangements is their serviceable afterlife—dinner for your family, a gift for a friend, or produce for the local food bank. Consider these options when making your selections of produce and the design style.

The Delaware Valley is a mecca of horticultural diversity, including fruits and vegetables available year round from local farms as well as from worldwide markets. The world is our garden and we can take full advantage of our markets and gardens when creating the perfect design, either to accent the foods we are serving or to remind us of the importance of their position within the horticultural scheme of things.

After making a fruit and vegetable arrangement, you can see how your own perspective changes. Be it the lowly potato or the prized tomato, each fruit or vegetable can impart a special persona to

Create an original party theme with green onion and leek arrangements adorning the tables. Bundle leeks and/or green onions together and tie the bundle with raffia. Tuck fresh cut flowers in between the tops of the greens. The flowers can be put in water tubes or use flowers that are durable out of water.

Serve potato-leek soup as an appetizer, and have recipe and seed packages for each guest. When everyone is leaving, give your guests the leek/onion bouquets to take home. (This is a wonderful theme for St. Patrick's Day.)

any ornamental arrangement. It may seem like a strange marriage at first, but as I've found out through many successful designs, fruits and veggies can be downright beautiful. 🍴

Eva Monheim is a well-known local horticulturist and lecturer. In addition to writing for *Green Scene*, she frequently gives demonstrations at the Philadelphia Flower Show.

Materials you will need to create your design:

- Sharp floral design knife
- Pair of pruning shears
- Shish-kabob skewers or floral picks
- Oasis (or other floral foam)
- Covered wire or wire and floral tape
- Your choice of fruits and vegetables
- Your choice of flowers and foliage
- Raffia
- Water tubes (optional)
- A container of your choice (it can be an actual fruit or vegetable container, or one used for regular floral design)



A TRIO of GOLD

Story by Sheila Gmeiner • Photography by Larry Albee

Each year, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society gives the Gold Medal Plant Awards to woody plants that excel at growing in our region. For 2001, the winners include a sturdy American evergreen, an unusual dogwood, and a charmer of a hydrangea named 'Annabelle'.

Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'



MEDAL WINNERS

The 2001 Gold Medal Plant Awards

SMOOTH HYDRANGEA

(*Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle')

Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle' is a winner. The species is a native shrub hardy in Zones 4 to 9. It has several common names, including smooth hydrangea, wild hydrangea, and high geranium, among others. 'Annabelle' was introduced by J. C. McDaniel of the University of Illinois. This cultivar flowers two weeks later than the cultivar 'Grandiflora' and boasts full globose flowers at least 8 inches in diameter, composed of showy, sterile blossoms.

In the landscape, this old-fashioned gal possesses a subtle charm and elegance. Grown as a spreading, multi-stemmed shrub, it can reach 3 to 5 feet in height and width at maturity. Smooth hydrangea is perfectly at home in the perennial border, foundation planting, or naturalized garden. The flowers bloom on new wood in mid-to-late June. Its large flower clusters are initially light green and then turn white. Fortunately, these flowers keep their heads up after rainfall and do not turn brown when wet. The leaves are green to dark green, simple, ovate to elliptic, and approximately 2- to 8-inches long.

In autumn, the leaves turn light yellow before falling. Proper pruning affects the plants' ability to remain intact after rain or wind. Instead of cutting these shrubs back to the ground every spring, leave some height on healthy, vigorous stems. Remove the oldest wood on an annual or bi-annual basis. This technique will result in favorable growth and beautiful flowers for this hydrangea. Unfortunately, deer may do some unplanned pruning as well.

Smooth hydrangea is not difficult to

grow, and it yields tremendous satisfaction. 'Annabelle' is not particular about soil pH but favors well-drained, moist soil in partial shade. If adequate moisture is available, it can tolerate some sun.



This hydrangea seldom encounters insects or disease, although powdery mildew, aphids, and mites may affect a poorly sited plant.

The best method of propagating 'Annabelle' is through softwood cuttings taken in June through August—this cultivar does not produce fertile seeds. *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle' can be seen and enjoyed at many of our local arboreta and public gardens, including the Scott Arboretum, the Morris Arboretum, Chanticleer, Mt. Cuba, Winterthur, Longwood Gardens and Brookside Gardens. 'Annabelle' is a dependable encore performer on a popular hydrangea stage. Enjoy her show!

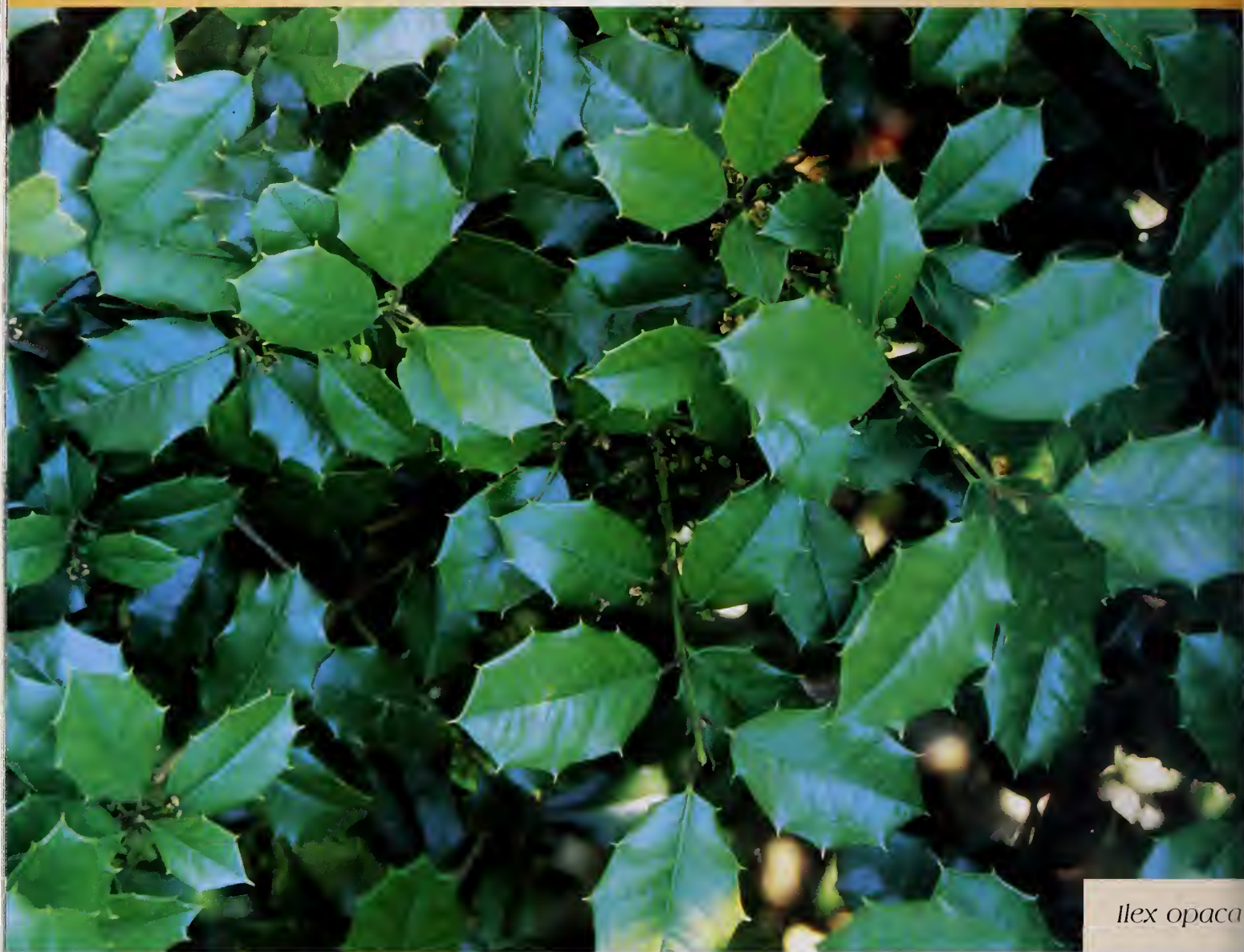
AMERICAN HOLLY

(*Ilex opaca*)

Baseball, hot dogs, apple pie, and *Ilex opaca*? Yes, *Ilex opaca*. It's as "American" as Chevrolet.

Ilex opaca, or American holly, is truly a classical and colossal species. Millions of years ago, its ancestor, *Ilex opacoides*, shared the land with the reigning dinosaurs. In the millennia that followed, *Ilex opaca* was routinely used in superstitious, symbolic, and traditional rituals of mankind. The wood from this American classic was also revered. This holly has long been prized for its fine hard-grained, light-colored wood. It has been used for chariot shafts, tomahawk handles, farm tools, furniture, inlay, and drawing and musical instruments.

The landscape value of *Ilex opaca* is as important as its past history. American holly can be used in either formal or informal types of landscaping. It is attractive as a single specimen evergreen tree or massed in a mixed border, hedge, or background. A pyramidal, broadleaf evergreen, *Ilex opaca* is native to the eastern United States and is hardy in USDA Zones 5 to 9. A grand 30 to 50 feet high at maturity, its base can become 15 feet wide, providing a habitat for birds and other wildlife. The flowers are small and insignificant, but when fertilized they produce a radiant fruit. These red fruits (1/8 to 1/4 inches in diameter) provide food for its occupants and persist throughout the winter. Another attribute is its apparent resistance to deer. The foliage and fruit are also used extensively for winter holiday decorations. Because of its aesthetics and versatility, *Ilex opaca*



Ilex opaca

has earned "heirloom" status among gardeners and *Ilex* enthusiasts.

Culturally, *Ilex opaca* has a wide spectrum of adaptability. It can thrive in a range of "seasonal" wet to dry soil conditions in either sun or shade. Some protection from winter winds and sun is recommended but not necessary. The root system is fibrous and shallow and plants can be easily transplanted in early spring or late fall.

There are several choice cultivars of *Ilex opaca* that Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Gold Medal committee plant experts agree are noteworthy. 'Jersey Princess' is a great choice for its dark green foliage; 'Satyr Hill' for its

extraordinary foliage size; and 'Old Heavy Berry' and 'Dan Fenton' for both fruits and foliage. Because this plant is dioecious (bearing male and female flowers on separate plants), a male of the same species in the vicinity will ensure fruit production. 'Jersey Knight' is a good choice for the pollination of female *Ilex opaca*.

There can be considerable variation within the species, too. For example, there is a spreading form, 'Maryland Dwarf', and a yellow-fruited form, 'Xanthocarpa'. All of the cultivars mentioned are grown by asexual reproduction. A chance seedling of *Ilex opaca* does not guarantee the desirable characteris-

tics of cultivars propagated by cuttings. A vegetative cutting will duplicate the phenotype and genotype of these splendid and remarkable hollies. (Phenotype refers to a specific appearance pattern shared by several individuals of a genus. Genotype is the species type within a genus.)

In this region, we can expect two or sometimes three flushes of 2-to-5 inch average growth per year, if nutrition levels are optimum. The ideal time for propagation is generally after these flushes become semi-hard wood. Rooting auxins can hasten the rooting process; rooting cuttings later in the growing season require increased concentrations of



THE GOLD MEDAL PLANT AWARD PROGRAM

The goal of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Plant Award is to unite gardeners interested in unique woody plants through a strong program of promotion and education. The Gold Medal recognizes woody plants of outstanding merit that are little known, yet available to the trade.

If you know about a great woody plant that's beautiful, disease and pest resistant, and is hardy in our Zone 5-7 region, it might be a contender for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Plant Awards.

To enter a plant for consideration, call (215) 988-8800 or fax us at (215) 988-8810, and we'll send you an entry form. The deadline for submission is December 15th. Each plant must fulfill the following qualifications:

- 1) *Three landscape-sized plants must be accessible to the evaluating committee.*
- 2) *Plants must be hardy from New York City to Washington, D.C.*
- 3) *A program of propagation must be under way.*

For source information on winning plants and a portrait sheet, send a SASE with 55¢ postage to: The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Attn: Gold Medal Plant Awards, P.O. Box 7780-1839, Philadelphia, PA 19182-1642. Also visit our website, www.libertynet.org/phs.

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auxins (these are natural plant hormones that are involved in various physiological processes such as root formation, stem growth, suppression of bud development, etc.). Occasional pruning is necessary for these moderately slow growers, primarily to develop the pyramidal shape of younger plants. Select a dominant apical leader to keep the plant well proportioned (the apical is the active growing tip of a plant).

Ilex opaca is a plant with much to offer. It is a gift to ourselves, our communities, and our environment.

CORNELIAN CHERRY DOGWOOD

(*Cornus mas* 'Golden Glory')

This is not your typical dogwood. It is not adorned with showy flower bracts in the spring, nor is it native from Florida to New England. So what does this "winter flowering" tree have that enabled it to earn the prestigious Gold Medal? *Cornus mas* 'Golden Glory', commonly known as Cornelian cherry dogwood, is a picturesque small-flowering deciduous tree and has reliable tri-season interest year after year.

Introduced by Synnesvedt Nursery Co. of Illinois in the 1960s, the genus *Cornus mas* is a Western Asian native hardy in Zones 4 to 7. *C. mas* 'Golden Glory' can be grown as a large shrub or as a single or multi-stemmed tree—whichever fits your landscape. Growing at a medium rate, 'Golden Glory' could become 20 to 25 feet high and 15-feet wide at maturity. It flowers profusely and



Cornus mas 'Golden Glory'

is more upright than the species. There are several reasons to grow this tree—the flowers, the fruits, and the bark. The early clusters of intense-yellow March flowers escape the frost and attempt to awaken the sleeping spring season. And, when 'Golden Glory' is used with companion plants such as *Hamamelis*, *Magnolia*, *Ilex* (deciduous and broadleaf), and early spring bulbs, spring seems even closer at hand.

The distinct fruit is edible (it makes a flavorful jam) and is a delicacy for birds and other wildlife. The oblong, bright-red fruits (5/8 by 1/2 inch) become noticeable in September. The thick and dark glossy-green leaves are approxi-

mately 4-inches long. These leaves are tougher in drought conditions than those of other *Cornus* species and their fall color is subtle. The exfoliating brown and gray bark is especially attractive at bloom time and provides striking winter appeal.

Cornus mas 'Golden Glory' is a maintenance-free living treasure. It is adaptable to many different soils and can be grown in full or partial sun. The root system is fibrous and is easily transplanted in the late fall or early spring. Better still, it is not susceptible to any pests or diseases of serious consequence.

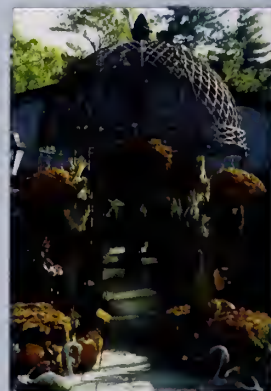
Propagation can be done by seed, cuttings, or grafting. Other cultivars of

Cornus mas include 'Alba', a white-fruited form, and 'Flava', a gold-fruited form. 'Variegata' and 'Aurea' have distinct foliar interest. Another cultivar, 'Spring Glow', was a favorite of the late horticulturist, J. C. Raulston. 🌱

Sheila Gmeiner—area manager and grower of deciduous and broadleaf trees and shrubs, topiaries, and perennials at Imperial Nurseries in Quincy, Florida—is also a member of the PHS Gold Medal Plant Award committee. Sheila has been working in the horticulture industry since 1982 and is certified as a Professional Horticulturist in Maryland and Florida. She has received two Certificates of Merit in Ornamental Horticulture from Longwood Gardens.

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Down on the Tree Farm

A Look at Philadelphia's Fast-Growing Community Forests

By Pamela Vu

On a hot summer day this past summer, I retreated from the daily grind and sought refuge in the shady nook of a tree. With a garden and church nearby and birds chirping overhead, it was a picturesque snapshot of country life. That is, until the blast of a car horn reminded me that I was in South Philadelphia, standing down on the Bel Arbor tree farm at 10th and Kimball streets. Although most trees in the city are transplants of large commercial tree nurseries, this and other tree farms in Philadelphia are looking to grow their own trees and in the process foster community spirit. Indeed, good things grow from urban tree farms.

BEL ARBOR'S BOUNTY

On one-third of an acre in south Philadelphia, trident maples, golden-rain trees, crab apples, Turkish filberts, and other trees flourish amid a wildflower and native-grass meadow. For members of the Bel Arbor gardening group, what began as an effort to stop a vacant lot from becoming a trash-dumping site has led to some-

thing of an urban-forestry movement in its own right.

"When we first started growing trees in 1995, it was simply a way to prevent people from trashing a lot in our neighborhood," recalls the group's president, Carla Puppin. "It wasn't long before we found ourselves fighting for a permanent home for the trees. We had to move the

Down on the Tree Farm

trees several times due to commercial development, but the trees were potted so it wasn't too much of a challenge. After we got to Bel Arbor, it looked like we'd have to move again when the owner decided to develop the site. Fortunately, he eventually decided to donate the land for long-term use by our residents; it was then that we decided to create a tree farm. We wanted to grow trees that would go back into our community."

In 1997, Bel Arbor volunteers planted 40 trees from the farm on the streets of South Philadelphia, and 22 more went in this past spring with plans to plant a dozen or so more trees next year. Puppin adds, "Since we started the tree farm, I've noticed more people putting up planters and window boxes on their blocks. And

the Kimball Street Community Garden next to the tree farm now has a waiting list for those who want a garden plot. There's no doubt the trees have made an impact in our neighborhood."

As for the future, Puppin says Bel Arbor members will help residents with tree care and maintenance, as well as become more involved in community tree programs and begin working more with youth.

A NORTH PHILADELPHIA FARM

Beyond the gardens and park space at the Village of Arts and Humanities in North Philadelphia [*profiled on page 6 of the August issue*], there is also a tree farm

that not only grows and sells trees, but also incorporates artwork into its surroundings. From the center of this lot, once the site of an abandoned factory, soars a high totem as a beacon of community revitalization. Guarding the grounds of the tree farm are colorful mosaic-studded figures that appear to be half man and half animal.

The Village grows trees, especially native trees, such as oaks, tulip trees, American beech, willow, and sycamore, all donated by the National Tree Trust. Most of these are sold to the Fairmount Park Commission and Awbury Arboretum, and the rest go back into the community. More than anything else, the tree farm serves as a job training and education site.



According to Jennifer Rulf, manager of environmental programs at the Village, the tree farm embodies the Village's mission of social and environmental services: "Right now we have 25,000 trees as seedlings, but we grow more than just trees. The tree farm is part of the Village's outreach program, which also includes parks, gardens, and art workshops. During the summer, paid teen interns work with our trained staff—who are usually hired from the community—to learn about plant propagation, potting, and how to incorporate greening into their own lives. The interns acquire jobs skills while making positive contributions to their community through greening. And there's also, of course, the environmental benefit of having a tree farm. It improves the air quality in the neighborhood, prevents dumping on the site, and adds beauty to the surrounding blocks."

TREES FOR EDUCATION & HEALTH

The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and the School District of Philadelphia all view trees as a way to educate students about the environment, as well as promote service learning. Hence, the "Seeds to Trees" program was born.

Here's how it works: students gather native seeds in their neighborhoods, schoolyards, and parks. Half the seeds

will be potted and remain at the Center. The other half will return with the students to their own school's tree labs. These seedlings will spend their first winter at the school before being transferred to the Center the following spring. After several years at the Center, the trees will be planted in permanent homes either at the Center or in community sites.

"Tree labs are basically mini-tree farms," says PHS Public Landscapes project manager, Joan Blair. "Each year, the Society's Tree Tenders project selects two schools that will begin a tree lab. The students build raised beds, where they will grow the tree seedlings, and go to places such as Temple Ambler Native Plant Nursery, Awbury Arboretum, or the Schuylkill Center to learn about tree care. Eventually the mature trees they tend will all receive permanent homes, either on the school grounds or in nearby neighborhoods."

Meanwhile, at the Center in the Park in Germantown, a senior center, trees mean better health. Researchers for some time now have documented the therapeutic value of greenery, from bolstering patient morale to reducing stress and violence in youth. The Center in the Park has taken heed to such benefits.

With money from the William Penn Foundation, the Center has devoted a portion of the grounds to growing trees. In this multi-generational setting, a group of teens—working alongside their mature cohorts—planted and are now maintaining the trees. All of the trees grown at the Center are now inhabiting area parks and other common spaces.

With plans underway to add living space to the Center, trees are no longer grown here. However, the temporary tree farm was successful in engaging seniors and young people in greening activities. It also provided trees for Germantown parks and gardens, as well as helped a local arboretum in reforestation efforts.

Left: Trident maples, golden-rain trees, and oaks, among others, are grown at Bel Arbor tree farm in South Philadelphia.



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Down on the Tree Farm

NON-PROFITS LEND A HELPING HAND

Thanks to non-profit organizations such as the National Tree Trust, National Arbor Day Foundation, and American Forests, cities across the country are puncturing their concrete with urban forests and hundreds of shady niches.

Whether it's planting more than 11 million trees through the American Forests' Global ReLeaf program, or turning a former vacant land in Philadelphia into a tree farm through a National Tree Trust grant, each of these non-profits is entrenched in a "treefare" of its own. What makes these programs so successful is the depth of involvement from their participants, from the local to the national level. They also provide monetary assistance, foster tree care education, and work in partnerships with groups of

varying sizes and needs.

According to Beth Clark, assistant program director at the National Tree Trust, "Of the more than 500 groups that received grants from the National Tree Trust this past year, about 120 groups (or 23%) used the money to start a tree nursery of some kind. Thirty groups in the Southeastern states and 25 groups in the Mid-Atlantic states built tree farms—these two regions had the most start-up tree farms this year."

REALITY CHECK

With everything going for tree farms, both environmentally and socially, why aren't there more of them in the city? For one thing, growing trees takes time...lots of it, in fact. On average, it takes at least two years or more before saplings are

ready to be transplanted to a permanent site. Unlike gardeners who see the fruits of their labors within weeks of planting, tree farm volunteers have to wait a bit longer. This is why it is important to have a committed and organized community group at the outset. Otherwise the farm may not survive.

Like many community efforts, these farms are a labor of love for the volunteers. Not just any volunteers, however. This dedicated corps needs to be knowledgeable in tree planting and care. They'll also spend much of their time watering and maintaining the trees. It's rewarding work, but *work* nevertheless.

There's also the issue of land. In urban settings, the land that is available—which often has been abandoned—needs to be tilled and improved before trees or anything can grow on it. Fortunately, for most



Pete Prown

Bel Arbor president, Carla Puppini, standing amidst young trees that will eventually be transplanted throughout the neighborhood.



Above: Saplings on the tree farm at North Philadelphia's Village of the Arts and Humanities. **Inset:** Young people in Pastorius elementary school's "Tree Lab."

tree farms in the city, grant money and tree donations from local arboreta have made it possible for them to obtain trees.

So before you go out and start your own tree farm, consider the time commitment and labor involved in sustaining this type of business. Also, keep in mind that these farms aren't money-making ventures. The people who launch tree farms are more concerned with reforesting our city blocks and promoting neighborliness. Regardless, many working on the tree farms will attest to the fact that "it's the toughest job you'll love."

THE URBAN FOREST

Even in the hardest-hit areas of Philadelphia, where hope can sometimes get crushed under the rubble of abandoned homes, our street trees stand tall and resolute. Weathering the extremes of city life, they continue to flourish and amaze us with their beauty and generosity. Although most trees are grown in tree nurseries outside of the city, local tree farms are staking a claim on the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

For every tree that is grown on these farms, its future is most certainly right

around the block. Not only do the trees contribute to our sense of well-being and community, they also provide environmental benefits as well. Trees reduce heat in urban areas; help to control storm-water runoff; cut pollution; and increase property value. The benefits are great, outweighing the costs of planting and maintenance.

Whatever shape or form a tree farm takes, be it combined with art, gardening, or urban farming, it is slowly taking root in our neighborhoods and creating a thriving urban forest within the city limits. ☐

Formerly associate editor for *Green Scene*, Pamela Vu is now managing editor of *The Record* for Columbia University in New York.

If you would like to learn more about urban forestry, or to start a community tree project, contact the following organizations:

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The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Tree Tenders Project
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The PASSIONATE PERENNIALIST

BY BEVERLY FITTS

Berry Pretty

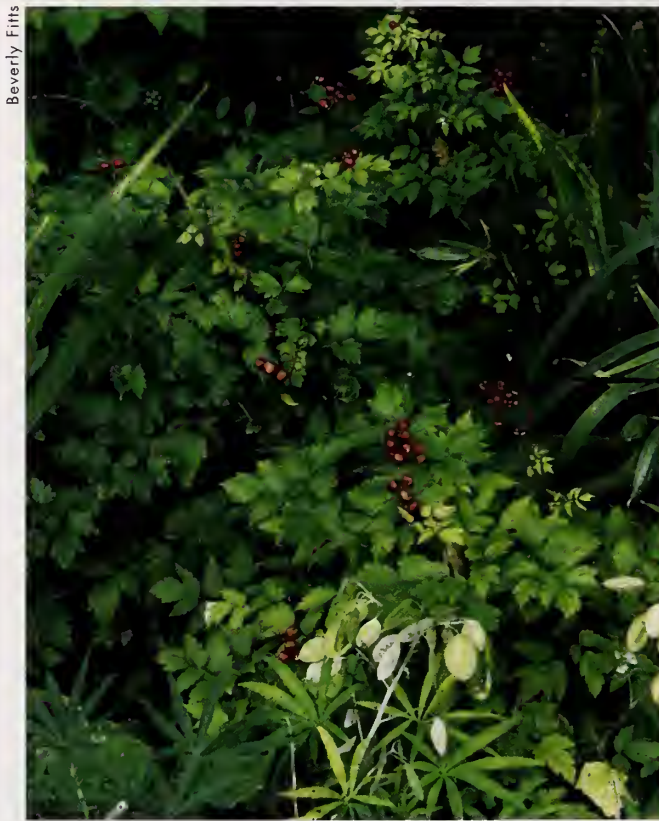
Just when I think color in my garden is over for the year, berries begin to appear. As a child I watched for wild blackberries on a nearby abandoned farm, delighting in a secretly foraged snack. As a young mother I watched for non-edible berries on backyard shrubs, fearing they might be too attractive for my inquisitive children. Now, as a seasoned gardener and fellow passionate perennialist, I watch for the colorful berries of favorite perennials, signaling the end of another growing season.

My woodland garden currently hosts the scarlet berries of arums (*Arum* sp.), Jack-in-the-pulpits (*Arisaema* sp.), and rohdeas (*Rohdea japonica*), plus the white, black-eyed berries of doll's eyes (*Actaea alba*), and the orange berries of the stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima*). I've always enjoyed the isolated spots of color these berries bring to my fall garden, but I never realized their full design potential until I saw them at Beth Chatto's.

Moving attentively through Chatto's famous garden in Essex, England, I came to a dead stop upon seeing a stunning combination of berrying perennials. The berries weren't an isolated afterthought, but the focus of a planned and perfectly executed autumn combination. In awe, I realized the possibilities of these herbaceous fruits. Instead of a bit of serendipity, they were the inspiration for the entire composition. It was a revelation.

Chatto combines the loosely-formed berries of red baneberry (*Actaea rubra*) with the tightly clustered berries of arums. The papery seed pods of honesty (*Lunaria annua*) repeat the rounded form of the berries and add textural interest to the fertile theme of the composition. She adds the upright blades of stinking iris to provide a contrast of form and texture to the

broad foliage of the arums and the finer leaves of the baneberry (see photo). In early fall, the iris also produces orange-red berries, extending the berrying season through winter. Her composition is a work of art and, for me, a new approach to berrying perennials.



Each fall now, I admire my berrying perennials and remember Chatto's brilliant creation. I imagine designs that mimic hers and envision exciting combinations to celebrate the beauty of the season. I dream of red berries with golden ferns, sway-ing grasses, and much more.

The red berries of Jack-in-the-pulpits always spur my imagination, because they were part of my childhood. My grandfather and I would track them down while walking in Pennypack Park. Our favorite resting place was a rock jutting into the stream under Ninety Foot Bridge. Jacks were usually found nearby. In spring my grandfather would lift the spathe and tell stories of imagined preachers. In fall, their bright red berries would mingle with the golden fronds of aging ferns, bringing the bril-

liant color of the trees right down to our feet.

The combination of ferns with arisaemas holds a special place in my heart, conjuring images of those magic childhood days. If Jack-in-the-pulpit berries were more reliable, I'd build sophisticated designs, like Beth Chatto's, around this beloved genus, adding native ginger (*Asarum canadense*), ferns, and stinking iris for a start. Yet, as much as artistic combinations excite my imagination, combinations that evoke memories transform my garden into a cherished space. These combinations offer more than color, form and texture. They offer memories, as well as dreams for next year's garden. ■

Beverly Fitts is a busy garden lecturer, photographer, and former president of the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group.

MAY DAY

What a super issue of *Green Scene* (May 2000). Kudos to you. It is the first time I picked up the magazine and instead of giving it a "glance through," I read each article right through to the end. All in one sitting. If I were you, I would frame this one for your wall!

J.R.
via the Internet

CHURCH HISTORY

I'd like to make a small clarification on the article "Flowers for the Spirit" that appeared in the July issue. Contrary to the text, the practice of decorating church altars dates back to the beginnings of history. Flowers have long been associated with celebrations of religious events. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans adorned their temples with flowers, herbs, and greens.

I have even read a charming anecdote written by a medieval priest who states that the change of the flowers and greens helped him mark the changing of the ecclesiastical seasons. The floral arrangements of our ancestors may have been stylistically less formal than those of today, but are no less important. Thank you for your excellent publication.

Sarah Dressler
St. Georges, Delaware

BOOK REPORT

I am writing to you for two reasons. First, I want to compliment you on the "Letter From the Editor" in the May issue. You so eloquently reminded me of my own personal experience with gardens and culture in general. It really struck a nostalgic chord within me.

Secondly, I want to thank you for the wonderful surprise on page 8, where you featured my book, *The Afterlife of Flowers*. As for Pamela Vu's critique, I

would reply that individuals looking for "how to" information can and do have interest my book. That's like saying a book featuring the paintings of an artist would not be interesting to others because it does not contain instructions on how to paint. Still, I am honored to have been selected for your publication.

Janie F. Gross
via the Internet

COMING UP ROSES

In your May issue, there was an article by Patricia A. Taylor called *Easy Roses*. Well, I went out and purchased some of the roses mentioned in the article, namely Carefree Delight and Flower Carpet Pink. What a success! These roses started to bloom immediately and have continued right through the summer. For an amateur gardener, you cannot imagine the delight I had with these roses.

How many times have we all purchased plants that were just "so-so" or never lived up to our expectations. But these roses exceeded all that. We need more "easy roses" like this—especially climbers—as well as other plants that beginning gardeners can plant without much effort. A lot of us don't have the time that we'd like to spend outdoors, but we still want a beautiful garden. Keep up the good work and thank you.

Bernie Keil
Boonton, NJ

COLOR CHARD

In the August issue, there is an article about Swiss chard that says its stems come in either white or red. Actually, the stems can be one of eleven colors, including pink, cream, yellow, gold, orange, apricot, scarlet, crimson, and bi-colored, as well as white and red. This is especially true of the variety 'Bright Lights', which won an All-America

award. Not only are its leaves more tender than the old white and red kinds, but they can be used decoratively as annuals to make sensational container plantings. Moreover, the colors are retained in cooking, while the younger leaves can be used raw as a lettuce substitute in sandwiches (since the bitter taste of the older varieties has been eliminated).

'Bright Lights' was developed from a New Zealand variety, 'Rainbow', by the late John Eaton of Maungaraki near Wellington. I brought this seed back to Pennsylvania in 1993 and have grown it every year since. From John's genetic material, Rob Johnson of Johnny's Select Seeds in Maine selected the eleven colors to make 'Bright Lights'. Rob readily acknowledges John's valuable work in the resulting seeds. Below is a photo showing its remarkable color range.

Derek Fell, author
The Pennsylvania Gardener
Gardenville, PA



Derek Fell

Send your letters to:

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TOOL TALES

BY ADAM LEVINE

Planting Bulbs

Most gardeners love bulbs, but abhor the chore of bulb planting. That's because too many of us use what I call the "hack and curse" method. On our hands and knees, we hack at the unprepared ground with a hand trowel trying to make a hole, which often isn't as deep as it should be since the hacking is so laborious. Our cursing comes after planting maybe seven or eleven bulbs, not nearly as many as we dream of having. Breaking up the soil, with either a shovel or spade or a rototiller, will make subsequent planting with a trowel far less aggravating.


At Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA, where 90,000 tulips are planted every fall, the rototilled soil is so airy and light that the job probably could be accomplished with teaspoons, though the crews choose to work with hand trowels instead. Even so, according to horticulturist Nora Lasher, it takes 5-10 gardeners at least a week in mid-October to get all those bulbs in the ground.

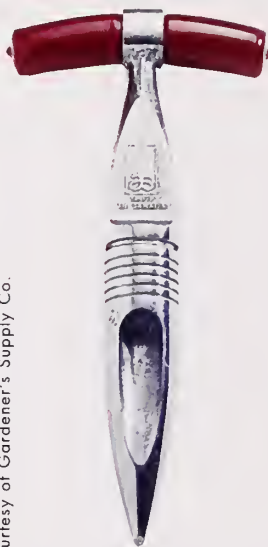
If you're lucky enough to have soil as loose as that at Longwood, a tubular hand-held bulb planter might work as well as a trowel (make sure to get one that's deep enough for larger bulbs like daffodils). You could also try a dibble, which is a hand-held tool with a sharp, pointy end, allowing you to essentially punch a hole in the soil. In new plantings I sometimes avoid hand tools altogether by excavating the entire area to the proper depth, setting the bulbs in place, then carefully backfilling with soil.

You might sometimes wonder how the pros plant bulbs *en masse*. Longwood gardeners use a specialized version of the circular bulb planter, especially when naturalizing small early-spring bloomers such as grape-hyacinth and Siberian squill in lawn areas. Resembling other long-handled bulb planters [see sidebar for sources], Longwood's tool stands about 40-inches high, with a step bar above a sharp circle of steel about 3-inches wide and 3-inches deep. Hopping up on the bar forces the circle into the lawn and makes a neat hole; the next step makes another hole, and pops the

first sod plug out. A person following the "sod-hopper" pops a bulb in each hole and replaces the plug.

For truly heavy-duty work, the gardeners at Chanticleer in Wayne, PA plant thousands of bulbs each year using a welded steel auger (28 inches long, the bottom third a 3-inch wide auger) on a heavy-duty electric drill with a 1/2-inch chuck and made for two-handed use. The drill can be rented, but the auger, alas, may be hard to find. Chanticleer horticulturist Dan Benarcik insists it's worth looking for, however, and says he'll never plant bulbs by any other method. Cheaper augers more commonly available, Benarcik warns, may be too lightweight for use in heavy, rocky soil, and could strain the motors of regular hand-drills.

Whether using specialized or garden-variety tools, the key is to find more efficient ways to get bulbs in the ground. Whether you use a trowel, dibble, or drill, the easier the job becomes, the more bulbs you'll be willing to plant and—after the long, gray winter—the more beauty we'll have to greet us in spring. 



Courtesy of Gardener's Supply Co.



Left: Dibble Right: Long-handled bulb planter

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www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com
(long-handled planter)

A frequent *Green Scene* contributor, Adam Levine also writes for *Garden Design* and *This Old House*, among other magazines.

UNCOMMON GROUNDCOVERS



BY PATRICIA A. TAYLOR

Waldsteinia fragarioides

Take heart all ye who share my dislike of pachysandra. There is an alternative to that ubiquitous and unrelentingly dull groundcover. It is called barren strawberry—a name, alas, that does not win many converts. Ah, but in real life it is a year-round, attractive, easy-care delight. Botanically dubbed *Waldsteinia fragarioides*, this plant is one of five in the genus. Three, according to the Royal Horticultural Society's Index of Garden

Plants, are native to North America, one to Japan and China, and one to central Europe. It is from this last little plant that the genus acquired its name. It honors a Viennese nobleman by the name of Count Waldstein-Wartenburg, who wrote a book in the early 1800s on rare plants of Hungary. (It is fortunate, I believe, that the genus took on the first rather than the last part of that name.)

All members of the genus were rare then and remain so to this day. As such, botanical descriptions vary tremendously. I base mine, except where noted otherwise, on four year's growing experience in Princeton, New Jersey. My plants are one of the American species and are reputed to be hardy in Zones 3-9, gracing woodlands from Quebec south to Georgia, and westward to Minnesota and Alabama. I started with three that I purchased from Bluestone Perennials and now they have become dense mats measuring 3 by 4 feet. These charming plants wander among a deciduous shrub border, ensuring horticultural interest throughout the year.

The leaves, resembling those on strawberry plants, are three-lobed, with each lobe measuring 2 inches. They are a rich, almost "Kelly green" color and provide a lovely floor to catch the falling scarlet and yellow foliage shed by the shrubs at this time of year. In winter, the leaves take on purple hues and are particularly lovely when emerging from a light blanket of snow.

Come early April, barren strawberry struts its stuff with a display that borders on gaudy. Light green leaves push up from the older, purple tinted ones and five-petalled, 3/4-inch, gor-



Photo from NATS Nursery LTD.

geous sun-yellow flowers float above on wiry, 1- to 2-inch stems. Usually these flowers open for six weeks, but this year, the combination of climate and weather encouraged them to produce flowers for a full two months. They leave behind no fruit; hence the popular name of barren strawberry.

I have yet to see any pest or disease attack this groundcover. Although the [expletive deleted] rabbit has visited it to eat the emerging stalks of *Triteleia hyacintha*

bulbs (I had so hoped to see their white, bowl-shaped flowers pushing up among the foliage in June). In the dark, moist shade of what I dub the "slug taste-testing area" by my front deck, the barren strawberries that were transplanted there two years ago thrive unblemished, slowly spreading by underground stolons.

How can such a great groundcover be so little known? Just in case I was overlooking some terrible trait, I consulted Viki Ferrenia. A former director of horticulture for the New England Wild Flower Society, Ferrenia is now manager of new-product development for Spring Hill Nurseries in Ohio. She has been using barren strawberries in her garden designs for 25 years and says it's a perfect groundcover for woodland gardens. It can also take light foot traffic and looks smashing in containers. Ferrenia also agrees with my observations that, despite several sources saying it can grow in full sun, barren strawberry fries in the unprotected heat of high summer.

And we also both agree that the only difficulty with barren strawberry is finding commercial sources. Fortunately, the following two offer it through the mail: Bluestone Perennials, 7211 Middle Ridge Road, Madison, OH, (800) 852-5243, www.bluestoneperennials.com; and Tripple Brook Farm, 37 Middle Road, Southhampton, MA 01073, (413) 527-4626, <http://tripplebrookfarm.com>.

So be daring. Be innovative. But most of all, be savvy and plant barren strawberry for year-long charm and interest. ■

Patricia A. Taylor describes many more superb groundcovers in her book, *Easy Care Native Plants* (Holt).

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The Perfect Amaryllis

By Ray Rogers

Known for his meticulously groomed plants, Ray Rogers has racked up numerous blue ribbons at the Philadelphia Flower Show over the years. Last spring, he won two PHS "Best Bulb Other Than Narcissus" rosettes for his amaryllis, Hippeastrum 'Pamela'. Indeed, it was a beauty. Here are a few of Ray's tips for basic amaryllis culture, including his secrets for getting spectacular blooms year after year.

First and foremost, start with a sound, healthy bulb. Then choose a pot (clay, not plastic) that allows about 1 inch of space between the bulb and the rim once the bulb is planted. I use azalea pots, which are shorter than standard pots of the same diameter, especially when the plants are in bloom. (A tall amaryllis—or a big clump—in a standard pot can tip over easily.)

For the soil, use a mix that has good

drainage but is able to retain moisture. I combine two parts of a peat-based potting mix with one part sterilized garden soil. To that I add a handful or two of coarse perlite, turface, or something similar. Plant the bulb with about half of it sticking above the soil mix. I keep the container in a bright, warm place (around 70°) and water lightly until active growth begins. Then I give it lots of water. Finally,

ago) and other pests (including slugs and wireworms). My plants live their entire lives in pots in a greenhouse. Control any mealybugs with insecticidal soap.

In early September, discontinue fertilizing and begin to cut down on watering. Stop watering *entirely* by the middle of October and let the foliage wither, turn yellow, and dry up. In November, put the pots in a cool, dimly lit place (a basement with windows is perfect) until January. In the meantime, keep checking for dying leaves and remove them. Don't give the plants *any* water.

In January, bring the pots back into the light and for a bit more warmth. Tips of the bloomstalks will begin to appear. Begin watering 4-8 weeks from the desired bloom date. As different cultivars bloom at different times, experience will soon tell you how long it takes from the first watering until first flowering.

Over subsequent years, let the bulbs grow into clumps and fill the pot (as opposed to the conventional wisdom of separating the offsets from the parent bulb). When the clumps get very thick, re-pot the entire clump soon after the flowers fade, remembering to leave about an inch between the root mass and the rim of the pot. I've found that the smaller-flowering cultivars, such as 'Scarlet Baby' and, of course, 'Pamela', multiply much faster and give more satisfying results than the large-flowering ones.

Following these tips, you too can have an impressive pot of amaryllis blossoms within a few years, something that you can both admire and help to usher in spring. 🌺

When he's not competing at the Philadelphia Flower Show, Ray Rogers is an editor for DK Publishing, Inc. in New York City.

Art Wolk

Ray Rogers



Top: A close-up of Rogers' amaryllis
Inset: The author with his prize winner

I sit back and enjoy the blooms.

Now, how do you get it to bloom again the following year? From April to August, keep the plant in active growth with plenty of water and liquid fertilizer (anything with more phosphorus than nitrogen). I keep mine in a bright greenhouse (shaded in summer) and never put them outside or in the open ground because of concerns over insects (bulb flies nearly destroyed my big clump of 'Pamela' several years

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PHS staffer Janet Carter

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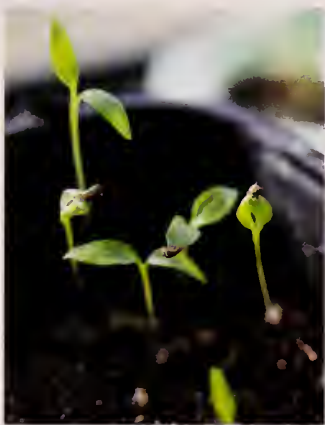
Contents

FEATURES

- 8** Fresh Herbs...All The Time
Dill in December? Fennel in February? Join Walt Chandoha as he leads us through the ins and outs of growing herbs indoors throughout the winter. If you've never tried this before, well, it's thyme that you did.

- 16** Growing Green
Adam Levine takes us on a personal tour of North Creek Nursery, a local wholesale operation that specializes in superb native plants. You'll also meet Dale Hendricks, the creative visionary behind this venture, as well as learn of his attempts to create a genuinely "environmentally friendly" nursery.

- 20** Ho, ho, ho!
The holidays are a great time for creative projects with "greens." Using branches cut from your yard, greens can be used to make a variety of Yuletide masterpieces, from wreaths to swags and more. This year, PHS staffer Janet Carter shows us how to make a joyous holiday centerpiece.



- 26** Weeds That You Can Love
Planting weeds in the garden? Of course...if they're beautiful and controllable. Toni Brinton introduces us to seven natives that some consider weeds, but for those-in-the-know, are great additions to the garden.

- 31** 1999-2000 Green Scene Index

COLUMNS

- 34** The Passionate Perennialist: Growing Arums
by Beverly Fitts

- 35** Uncommon Groundcovers: Golden Ragwort
by Patricia A. Taylor

- 36** Tool Tales: The Mattock
by Adam Levine

- 38** Classified Ads

- 40** Backyard
A Scientist's Garden

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society motivates people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

Cover Photo by Rob Cardillo

GREEN scene

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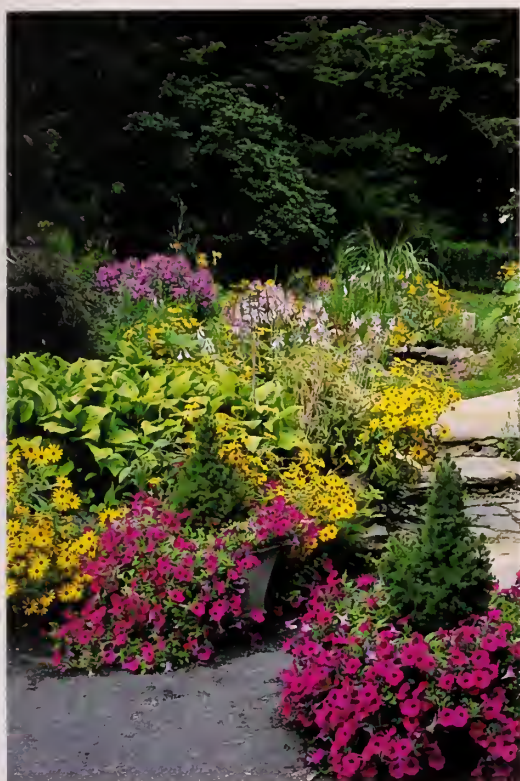
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Letter From the Editor



It often surprises me when someone says, "I'd love to have a garden...but it's too much work." Or worse, "I just don't have the time." To my mind, I can't think of a pastime that returns so much for so *little* work. We've heard a lot of talk

Low-Maintenance Lessons

about "low maintenance" gardening in the past few years, but perhaps not enough new gardeners have bought into this relatively painless approach.

I can safely classify my garden as low maintenance. Indeed, if a garden is supposed to reflect the personality of its creator, then mine reveals those things I value, which, above all else, is getting a big return for minimal investment (I tend to refer to this quality as being *thrifty*. My wife, however, calls it *cheap*.)

As for actual work, the hardest part of gardening, as many of you know, is the initial digging of the beds—awful work, that is. In my otherwise-favorite reference book, *The Garden Primer*, author Barbara Damrosch writes about how she gleefully

double-digs beds to a depth of 2 feet. I don't know about you, but I don't think there's anything gleeful about double-digging, much less single-digging or any other digging that comes down the pike. But if you want to have a garden and can't hire strapping young people to dig the beds and amend the soil for you, then you will have to grab a shovel or tiller and face the music. This, however, is really the only part that I would dub as "grueling."

The next step—installing the plants—is where you, The Gardener, will determine how much upkeep your garden will require in the future. If you don't mind fussy plants like delphiniums or those that need frequent staking, like lilies after a thunderstorm, then more power to you—I'll be on the veranda, admiring your efforts and sipping iced tea.

In my home garden, the golden rule for every plant is, "Take care of yourself." Like many so-called "native" advocates, I gravitate towards tough perennials and annuals, ornamental grasses and shrubs, self-sowers (such as foxglove and cleome),

and a few tropical bulbs for spice [see

photo] Certainly, no one will confuse this plot with one of the spectacular private gardens you'll see on PHS Garden Tours each spring. But it meets my personal standard of beauty and is definitely low, low maintenance.

I speculate that, in all, I spend less than five hours each month on deadheading, weeding, edging, and general clean-up from mid-June through September. In order to achieve this light workload, I pack annuals and perennials densely together, allowing little room for weeds to move in and take up residence. Those that do—ground ivy, clover, and that scheming villain, bindweed—are easily removed in a few minutes. There are also one or two invasive plants that I intentionally

leave in, though under supervision (the forget-me-nots grow like wildfire and I do pull out dozens each June after bloom time, but they're the mainstay of the May garden. A necessary evil, I think of them).

If we could put this low-maintenance approach into an equation, it would be: *right plants + right place = low maintenance*. One of my past errors can help illustrate this. With only part sun available, I planted a pot of Russian sage (*Perovskia* sp.) for a vertical shot of lavender. However, without quite enough sun to keep it erect, it just flops on the ground each year, forcing me to move it out of the way whenever I mow the grass.

Instead, if I had put in a shade-loving *Tiarella*, *Pulmonaria*, or an interesting *Hosta* in the same spot, I wouldn't have to do a thing. This is the essence of the low-maintenance method. (By the way, for a taste of what Russian sage should look like, visit the East Courtyard of the Philadelphia Museum of Art in midsummer and witness the dramatic lavender show, a project managed by PHS's Philadelphia Green program).

So if you've been putting off the commitment of a full garden or have a procrastinating friend, then it's time to jump in. Once those beds are dug and you select specimens that follow the "right plant, right place" model, then the garden you've always dreamed of will be a far easier affair than you think (for specific plant advice, take a book out of PHS's McLean Library or contact our Horticultural Hotline).

Better still, the more garden you have, the less lawn you will have to mow. Call me lazy, but thanks to the low-maintenance approach, I now spend much more time in my garden sitting and enjoying the scenery than I do pulling weeds. By the way, can you pass the iced tea?

Pete Prown
greenscene@pennhort.org



Dial "M" for Monkshood

There's something luridly appealing about growing monkshood in one's garden. Not only is it a tall and charming perennial, but also quite poisonous to ingest. In cultivation for nearly 500 years, monkshood (*Aconitum* sp., Zones 3-8) has a rich and colorful history, as well as a long list of hapless

victims—including those who unwittingly picked its leaves for dinner. Of its notorious past, author Rob Proctor dryly notes in *Perennials*, "Monkshood has enjoyed a reputation for solving unhappy marriages, although it was once considered a rather vulgar remedy—not at all the sort of poison for a person of good breeding."

Despite its scandalous reputation, monkshood (or wolfsbane, as it's also known, so named for the lethal wolf poison once extracted from its roots) remains a sturdy and interesting garden perennial. Admired for its shroud-shaped flower of dark blue, pink, yellow or white, this member of the *Ranunculus* family is a durable bloomer from mid-summer through fall. It is rather tall (3 feet or more), but often with a narrow spread—try to plant it in mass for best effect. It also prefers moist, well-drained soil; in my Pennsylvania garden, it has happily returned each year, despite heavy, clay-like soil and only part sun.

Gardeners may want to wash their hands after handling monkshood, as well as keep it away from pets and overly inquisitive children (though in his new Timber Press book, *Garden Flowers*, Christopher Lloyd counters, "But who is going to be tempted to nibble aconites anyway? This insistence on designating every poisonous plant has spread like a leprosy, wasting a lot of time, space, and effort. I suppose we shall be expected to label our poisonous weeds soon...").

Deadly or not, to the gardener-in-the-know, monkshood is a champion performer in the Delaware Valley, providing a dramatic spike of flowers long after the delphiniums and foxglove have withered away. Call it a "fatal attraction."

—Pete Prown

Pete Prown

The Secret Gardens of Temple's Main Campus

Glenn Eck doesn't know the acreage of his horticultural domain at Temple University. "It's irrelevant here," declares the 31-year-old, whose official title is Assistant Superintendent of Grounds. "You'd be surprised how many tucked-in, hidden, and enclosed garden spaces there are at school." Indeed, it may come as a surprise that Temple's main campus on North Broad Street houses several of Philadelphia's most delightful gardens, including "secret" spots, like the Tuttleman Courtyard, Johnny Ring Garden, and Annenberg Courtyard.

"One of the maintenance challenges is that there are so many of these 'pocket parks' to look after. I think a lot of people aren't even aware that some of these spaces even exist," says Eck, who was trained at Longwood Gardens and England's Royal Horticultural Society, among others. With the help of 16 crew members and six students under his

direction, he likes to point out that he was introduced to the challenges of gardening in an urban environment during two seasons of drought. "During my first two years here, the drought made work very difficult, but I learned a lot. It may even have been helpful, in that it saved me from making some mistakes in plant choice and siting. Now, I'm better able to understand the planting needs of an urban campus in summer."

An example of his influence is evident in the eight large, circular containers located in the sunken Founder's Garden, which now boasts dramatic displays that last through the seasons. Before Eck's tenure, the concrete urns were planted solely with annuals each spring, and stood empty during the winter. But now, he gets very creative each fall: "When we prune the evergreens in early December, we save all the cuttings and combine them with ornamental kale to make huge winter arrangements in these containers. This is something I've been proud of and they've attracted a lot of attention."

For his part, Eck feels fortunate to have found the job at Temple. "Temple is going for a more garden-esque feel. A lot of other college campuses have a park-like setting with plenty of trees, lawn, and maybe limited plantings. But at Temple, they like a lot of color, which makes me happy here because that's what my training is. I come from a public-gardens background, rather than park management, and now I'm studying landscape architecture. I like to think of myself as painting on the ground."

—Caroline Meline



Eck in one of Temple's "pocket parks".

GARDEN NET



AAS WINNERS. The winners of the 2001 All American Selections (AAS) Awards have been announced and, as usual, there's a crop of great plants from which the gardener can choose. The AAS Gold Medal went to **Zinnia 'Profusion White'**, a disease-resistant annual with 2-1/2 inch single flowers that spreads from 12-24 inches and never needs pruning or pinching.

Other flower winners for the year include the hot-pink portulaca 'Margarita Rosita'; lisianthus 'Forever Blue'; the dwarf nicotiana 'Avalon Bright Pink'; and the sunflower 'Ring of Fire', whose petals have golden outer tips and turns a deep burnt-orange near the center. For pictures and descriptions of these and other AAS winners (all of which will be available for purchase next year), visit www.all-americanselections.org.

DON'T PANIC—GO ORGANIC. So says Gardens Alive! (812-537-8650, www.gardens-alive.com), a mail-order catalog devoted to environmentally responsible products for the lawn and garden. They were championing the practice of organic gardening following the EPA's ban on the pesticide **Dursban**, which no longer met safety standards. At the time of the announcement, Dursban was the most widely used chemical pesticide in the U.S., found in more than 800 consumer products. In many ways, this move heralds the growing trend here towards organic

continued

The Gardener's Bookshelf

FLOWER & GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHY



Flower & Garden Photography
by Derek Fell
(Silver Pixel, 144pp., \$29.95)

Level: Beginner to intermediate
Pros: Colorful and informative
Cons: No index

For anyone who wants to improve their garden photos, this book should prove eminently useful. Written and photographed by noted local lensman Derek Fell, this comprehensive text walks the reader from equipment selection through numerous techniques to the lighting idiosyncrasies of various flowers. Illustrating the text are hundreds of color photographs, including highly useful "error" shots that show what not to do when you push the shutter release.

The range of topics include macro (close-up) images, as well as lush landscape shots from Fell's many world excursions. Cumulatively, this makes for a thorough and clearly written text on becoming a better garden photographer. For a reference book, the lack of an index is an obvious inconvenience, but the rest of the book is quite strong and, indeed, highly recommended.

—Pete Prown

Chile Peppers: Hot Tips and Tasty Picks for Gardeners and Gourmets

By Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Beth Hanson, Guest Editor
(Science Press, 111 pp., softcover, \$9.95)

Level: All levels
Pros: Colorful pictures, interesting recipes and gardening tips
Cons: Not much depth

As Handbook 161 in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's 21st Century Garden Series, *Chile Peppers* is so much fun that it will tempt even those most timid about eating hot foods. To those who *love* it hot, this booklet offers a satisfying, albeit introductory range of information from the history of the chile, from growing chiles both indoors and out to cooking with chiles (14 recipes are included). Finally, it lists where to obtain even the rarest varieties.

An altogether useful book, the chapter "What Makes Chiles Hot" will help you apply scientific objectivity to the agony you'll experience after nibbling a Habanero pepper, the hottest chile known to humankind. Another chapter, "Encyclopedia of Chile," could likewise help prevent a painful culinary experience.

The usual assortment of gourmet recipes also offers up a weird one or two: imagine Chile-pecan brownies that will wake up anyone's grandma or discourage the kids from begging for sweets for a while. Overall,

Chile Peppers is a book equally at home in the greenhouse, library, or kitchen. Just keep a fire extinguisher handy.

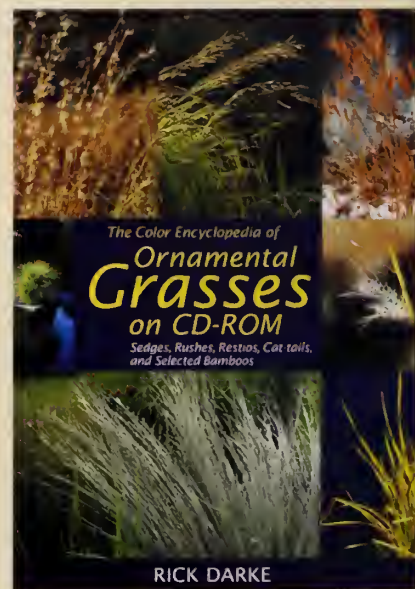
—Laurie Fitzpatrick



gardening.

Notes George Wagner, 63, who has been gardening in California for nearly 50 years, "I simply don't want to expose myself to chemicals in the garden." When George's pepper plants became infested with aphids this year, instead of using Dursban or another chemical, he used an organic spray made from chrysanthemums and a canola oil called Pyola, which quickly did the trick. Adds 77-year-old gardener Joy Bell, "I prefer organic products because each one of us needs to do what we can to preserve the environment. It's also a comfort to me to know that I'm not exposing myself to chemicals whenever I'm working in the garden."

GRASSES ON DISK. Timber Press is known far and wide for its scholarly reference books on horticulture, but now they've opted for the electronic route with a CD-ROM called **The Color Encyclopedia of Ornamental Grasses**. Written by noted Delaware Valley writer/photographer Rick Darke, this disk (PC format, \$59.95) is a companion to the 1999 book of the same name, and includes text and over 700 hi-resolution photos of sedges, rushes, cat-tails, and selected bamboos. There's also an easy "Search" function to track down plants and plant names with the click of a button. For more information, call (800) 327-5680 or visit www.timberpress.com.





ASK A GARDENER

by Hotline Volunteers

I have a small dendrobium orchid that I purchased at last year's Philadelphia Flower Show. It just finished blooming for the first time since last March, but all of the new buds have turned purple and dried up without ever opening. Any ideas why?

John Donahue, Pine Hill, NJ

"Bud blast" may occur because temperatures are too cold or too hot. Also, ethylene air pollution—which is harmful to orchids—can cause buds to turn pink, then brown, and drop off. One source of ethylene is ripe or ripening fruit. A basket of ripe apples or other fruit nearby can cause such problems. Also, make sure the plant is getting adequate air circulation, is properly potted, and is receiving the correct orchid fertilizer.

On the subject of failed blossoms, Elvin McDonald writes in his book *100 Orchids for the American Gardener* (Workman Press), "Adequate light is needed to sustain the flowers (of course, no hot, direct sunlight, except possibly for brief times early or late in the day). Avoid heaters, coolers, fireplaces and the TV, and take care that spotlights and floodlights are not placed too close to the flowers."

Is there place in or near the city where residents can acquire compost for free or at reduced cost? I have a small city garden and would probably only need a few bags.

*Alison McDowell,
Philadelphia, PA*

There is the Fairmount Recycling center on Ford Road in Fairmount Park.

The center is there for all city residents; you just bring your own spade or fork and plastic bags.

I received a three-month subscription of flowering bulbs as a Christmas gift. I just read that they may not be good to force indoors again, but I'm wondering if I can plant them outside in the spring to bloom next year. Also, should I continue to water them indoors until I can plant them outside?

Barbara Kasper, Rochester, NY

You should keep your pots watered until it is time to plant outdoors; in the Delaware Valley area, the last frost date is May 15th. These bulbs will come up this spring, but the performance will not be as good as new bulbs. However, with some bulb food and growing outdoors for a year, they should recover for the second year's bloom.



A LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE. Are you planning to enjoy a living tree for the holidays this year? If so, how will you keep it alive through the winter? As PHS president Jane Pepper offers in her book, *Jane Pepper's Garden* (Camino Books), "If you plan to purchase a live, balled, and burlapped Christmas tree, dig your planting hole now, rather than face solid, frozen ground on New Year's Day. Put the fill dirt in an area where it will not freeze and keep the hole open by filling it with loose mulch. It's also wise to surround the hole with stakes to avoid accidents."

GARDEN WRITERS IN PHILLY. On September 15, 2000, over 600 members of the Garden Writers Association of America (GWAA) invaded Philadelphia for a four-day symposium of lectures and garden tours. They visited Longwood, Scott Arboretum, Chanticleer, Morris Arboretum, and Bartram's Garden, along with a number of private gardens.

One high point was a visit to the **Village of the Arts & Humanities** in North Philadelphia [profiled in the *August 2000 issue*]. The garden writers—many of whom represent magazines, newspapers, websites, and other major media outlets—were awed by the artistry and passion of Lily Yeh and her army of volunteers. Indeed, it was a big day for the Village, as well as for PHS's **Philadelphia Green** program, which has supported the garden for many years.

Do you have a question for our garden experts? If so, contact PHS's Horticultural Hotline in the McLean Library, which is open Monday-Friday, 9:30-noon. Phone (215) 988-8777; fax (215) 988-8783; email: askagardener@pennhort.org.

The perfect centerpiece for a dinner table is a cluster of fresh herbs. Dinner guests are encouraged to pinch and snip the herb of their choice to amend the flavor of their food, just like salt and pepper. The next morning, the herbs go back on their sunny windowsills.



Fresh Herbs

all Winter

Story and Photography by Walter Chandoha

Most winters, I have a pot of fresh rosemary growing in my windowsill herb garden—but not last year. In the fall I had forgotten to dig up and pot a full-grown specimen growing in my outdoor garden. And for a mid-winter dinner party, I needed rosemary to spark up my signature dish of herbed roast pork. Reluctantly, I had to buy the dried stuff in one of those tiny jars—less than a half ounce for \$2.95. Highway robbery! And even worse, in the produce department a couple of branches of fresh basil for my Insalata Caprese cost \$2.50. Right then and there I vowed to have fresh herbs all the time, whether it's summer or the dead of winter. Here's how you can, too.

Fresh Herbs

WHAT TO GROW

During the summer and early fall, growing fresh herbs in the garden is a given. Fortunately, if you have a few sunny windows, it's relatively easy to grow fresh herbs indoors all through the winter, too. You'll not get bumper harvests as you would from your summer outdoor garden, but you get enough ferny dill to add to a pot of chicken soup, cilantro to flavor salsa or a salad, and certainly enough rosemary and sage to add another dimension to pork, chicken, or beef.

Some herbs do better than others indoors. Annuals like basil, parsley, and dill are a cinch. All you need are some pots, seeds, a sterile soil mix, and lots of sunny window sills. Most of the perennials—sage, thyme, winter savory, bay and lemon grass—thrive indoors (rosemary is iffy because of spider-mite infestations). Chives and tarragon need a dormant cold spell before resuming growth in mid-winter. Pot some up in the fall, bury the pots in a pile of chopped leaves until the New Year, bring them indoors, and new growth will start almost immediately. You'll be harvesting within a month.

You can start your winter herb garden in three ways: start plants from seeds; dig up and pot plants growing out in the garden, or buy started seedlings from nurseries or by mail from garden catalogs.

Let's take indoor seed-starting first. Forget about seeding perennials for now. They are best dug up from the garden or grown from bought seedlings. Yes, you can go the seed route with perennials if you want to get lots of plants economically for the summer outdoor garden. But except for chives, perennials take too long to get a harvestable amount during

the winter.

Because annuals grow fast and are usually consumed frequently, these are a better choice for starting from seeds. But at this time of the year, local stores have not yet gotten their new supply, so mail-order catalogs are your best source. If you have seed packets left over from last year, use them but sow double the amount indicated to make up for the reduced viability of old seed. If you've saved your own seed from last summer's garden, you will have no problem, as they are the freshest you can get.

SOIL & FERTILIZER

Regular garden soil packs too tightly when used in container gardens, so I use a sterile soil mix like Pro-Mix or Jiffy-Mix. These are mixtures of peat, perlite, vermiculite and assorted nutrients. All are dusty, bone dry, and need to be moistened. Cut a slit in the bag, slowly add water, and knead to blend it with the mix. It should be damp to the touch, but not sopping wet.

For each potful of mix, I add a generous pinch of Osmocote, a timed-release fertilizer. As the round pellets slowly dissolve over weeks and months, the fertilizers they contain are taken up by the plants. Additionally, twice a month, water the indoor herbs with a water-soluble fertilizer (like Schultze, Miracle Gro, or Peter's) at half the recommended amount so you don't burn the roots and kill the plants.

STARTING SEEDS

Fill a flower pot with moistened mix, sprinkle seeds over the surface and just barely cover with a pinch or two of more mix. Insert the seeded pot into a plastic



Above: Dig up cold-sensitive rosemary before frost, then plant it in a pot to spend the winter indoors. Next spring, plant it outside again.

Right: A radiator to provide bottom heat, a sunny windowsill, and a plastic container and bags to trap moisture make an ideal seed starting combination. Remove the bags once the seeds germinate. (Some of the basil in the pot on right will be transplanted to individual containers.)

Far right: When seedlings are a few inches high, transplant to individual pots. To maximize sun exposure once potted, move herbs around from one sunny room to another.





Fresh Herbs

There is safety in numbers. Clustering pots together boosts the moisture in the air surrounding the plants. This added moisture is especially helpful in houses heated with hot air, which can create an environment that is too dry.

bag, seal with a twist tie; then set it atop a warm place—a refrigerator or even a radiator. Bottom heat accelerates germination, but buffer the heat with a 2-inch stack of magazines. As soon as the seeds sprout, take the pot out of the bag and place it on a sunny window.

The seedlings will be crowded. Depending on how much of any one herb you use, either let them grow crowded in the starting pot or transplant clusters of 3-4 seedlings into individual pots. Available sunny window space is also a consideration. This seems obvious, but don't make more potted seedlings than you have room for. If I'm limited in space, I stick to just one pot with crowded seedlings and use the "cut-and-come-again" method, notably for harvesting basil, dill, cilantro, fennel (grown for its ferny anise-flavored leaves), and parsley, the latter of which is actually a biennial.

With a pair of scissors, I snip off the desired amount about 2-3 inches above the soil line, but never cutting any more than 1/3 of the tops. In their fertile soil, the plants quickly send up new growth and, in a few weeks, you'd never know they were cut. Herbs growing in their individual pots are harvested by pinching off solitary leaves as needed. To have a supply of fresh annual herbs all winter, I make new sowings about every three weeks. As the older plantings are used up, the newly sown plants push up new growth.

TRANSFERRING GARDEN PLANTS TO POTS

If you're as heavy an herb user as I am, the best way to have an abundance of herbs in your winter window-sill garden is to dig up the big, mature plants from

the garden in fall. In our USDA Zone 6 region, tender perennials like rosemary, bay, and lemon grass have to be brought indoors anyway, so you might as well consider these as candidates for your winter garden. At the same time, dig some of the winter hardy perennials and even annuals for potting.

Lift the herbs 3-4 weeks before the first fall-frost date. Here in the Mid-Atlantic area, that's around October 15, give or take 10 days. The day before digging, deeply water the soil surrounding the chosen herbs. The following day, use a sharp spade to slice into the soil around the sides of each herb and lift it out, taking care to keep the root ball intact. Fill the bottom of a pot with 1-2 inches of soil mix fortified with a generous pinch of Osmocote and set the dug-up herb into the pot so that the top of the root ball is about an inch below the pot's rim. Fill the space around the root ball with more soil mix and tamp it down to eliminate air pockets, water thoroughly, then take the potted herb to a sheltered outdoor area (where it can become acclimated to its new home in the pot).

After a couple of weeks of this reverse hardening-off process, hose off the plants to get rid of any bugs that might be lurking in the foliage. After the foliage is completely dry, bring the plants indoors to their new winter home.

NURSERY-GROWN PERENNIALS

Lacking big, mature herbs from the garden, you can order seedlings by mail from garden catalogs. Chances are slim that local plant markets and garden centers will have any in stock at this time of the year, but check out florists and




Fresh Herbs

greenhouses in your area. Some stock herb seedlings all-year round.

When you receive the plants, pot them in 6-inch containers using the same sterile soil mix used for starting annual seeds. Water the plants, then park them indoors where they get bright light, but not direct sun. After about a week of coddling, move them to the sunniest window available. Care for them as you would annuals.

INDOOR CONDITIONS

Most houseplants—and that's what your container herbs become when you grow them indoors—prefer a slightly cool climate and soil more dry than moist. Foliage, however, benefits from frequent misting to counteract the dryness in most heated homes. Household spray bottles, thoroughly rinsed and filled with water, are perfect for this use. I put the potted herbs in the kitchen sink and spray mist the entire plant, including the undersides of the leaves. The foliage gets the humidity it likes, but even more importantly, the weekly spraying dislodges lurking aphids, white flies and spider mites. I also do this so that the herbs I eat won't have any bug killers of any kind on them. The weekly water misting is adequate to keep the plants bug-free.

So what are you waiting for? Though the weather is turning cold outside, the time is always right for fresh herbs in your cooking. Just grab a pot, soil, and seeds...and you're in business. 

Walt Chandoha is a professional garden photographer and writer who lives in New Jersey.

Walt's Gourmet Herb Recipes

Herbed Roast Pork

Boneless pork loin (6-10 inches long)
3-4 cloves of garlic
5 8-inch sprigs of rosemary
10-20 sage leaves
2 tablespoons salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1-2 teaspoons of olive oil
1 cup chicken stock
Dollop of white wine
3 tablespoon flour
4 oz. butter
12-16 oz. sliced mushrooms

- Score fat side of pork with criss-cross gashes about 1-inch apart, penetrating through the fat and just barely cutting into the flesh.
- Strip leaves off rosemary stems, combine with sage, garlic, salt, and pepper. Mince herbs and add enough olive oil to make a paste. Rub the herb mixture all over the meat, working it into the criss-cross gashes.
- Cook in oven at 400°F for 1/2 hour. Add 1/2 cup chicken stock to pan, lower heat to 325°F, roast for another 30 minutes. Add more chicken stock (or water) to keep liquid in bottom of pan.
- Remove meat to platter and let rest for 15 minutes.
- Deglaze bottom of roasting pan with white wine, add balance of chicken stock, and use enough of the flour to thicken the sauce. For a richer sauce, melt and blend the butter in with the other ingredients.
- Add half the mushrooms to the sauce, reduce its volume by about a third (these mushrooms will shrink). Just before serving, add the balance of the mushrooms and heat through.

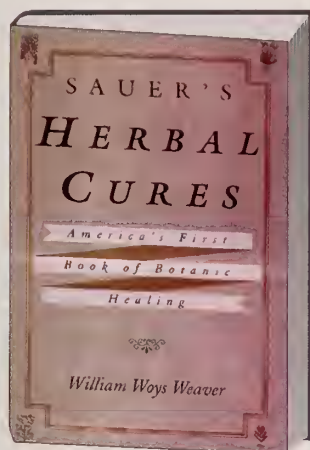
- Slice the pork 1/2 to 1 inches thick, cover with mushroom sauce, and serve. Excellent with rice or mashed potatoes. This herb mixture can also be used to coat beef, veal or lamb roasts, and is especially good on grilled chicken.

Insalata Caprese (Tomato/mozzarella salad)

Fresh ripe tomatoes (one per person)
Fresh mozzarella
Basil
Garlic
Extra virgin olive oil
Balsamic vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste
Fresh Italian bread

- Slice tomatoes, slice mozzarella. Arrange on plate alternating tomatoes with cheese. The salad is more eye appealing if both red and yellow tomatoes are arranged to alternate with the cheese.
- Sprinkle shredded basil leaves over the tomatoes and cheese.
- Sprinkle with minced garlic and dust with salt and pepper.
- Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and dot with vinegar. Use about 4 parts oil to 1 part vinegar.
- After the salad is gone, mop up the garlic-infused vinaigrette with the Italian bread. The insalata can be served as a first course on individual plates, as a main dish entree on a big platter, or as a salad following a pasta or meat entree.

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Native Son

A Visit with Dale Hendricks of North Creek Nurseries

Story by Adam Levine

As I step into a greenhouse at North Creek Nurseries in Landenberg, Pennsylvania, I initially only notice the color—bright green as far as I can see, about a hundred feet to the door at the opposite end. I follow Dale Hendricks, the nursery's co-owner, down the center aisle, and realize that the color's source is my favorite native plant. "Tiarella!" I intone, shaking my head, amazed by the beauty of this miniature mass planting. "How many are there?" I ask, and Hendricks makes a quick mental calculation and guesses between 10,000 and 15,000. I'm entranced.

A wholesale operation, North Creek produces starter plants, or plugs, that other wholesalers and retailers buy and grow on to full size, so each tiarella is no more than a few leaves in a plastic cell only 1-1/2 inches square. But as small as they are, the sweep of tiny foamflowers reassures me that, even while the habitat of this and many other native plants continues to be degraded and destroyed, the plants themselves are in no danger of extinction.

North Creek's latest 60-page catalog has more than 300 species and cultivars, many of which are Eastern U.S. natives that gave the business its start. "These days, lots of people don't want a lot of lawn, but aren't aware of the alternatives," Hendricks says. "What we're trying to do is create a new vision of what's beautiful, largely by using natives. These are plants with habitat value and, if they're properly selected, offer a sense of regional harmony and appropriateness to the landscape. By planting native, you take gardening way beyond decorating, beyond the merely ornamental, and give it all these positive environmental values. We call it 'ecologically-informed horticulture,' and look at ourselves as a bit of a new bridge in the industry." He laughs and adds, "Though it seems to be a rope bridge at times."

Hendricks, 48, and his business partner, Steve Castorani, founded the nursery in 1988 to grow and market native plants, a niche few others occupied at that time. "Back then, natives weren't fashionable, they were misunderstood," Hendricks recalls. "People thought they looked weedy and harbored ticks. Fortunately, they've since become more accepted."

While Hendricks did a bit of gardening growing up in Lederach, 40 miles north of Philadelphia, he never intended to make horticulture his life's work. In



Above: *Solidago rugosa*
'Fireworks'

Left: *Lonicera*
sempervirens 'Blanche
Sandman'

college, he first studied psychology and then philosophy, paying his own way with a series of odd jobs—dishwasher, golf caddy, welder, taxi driver—but in the end, never getting a degree. In 1975, he was living in Lancaster, PA when a friend told him about job openings at Green Leaf Enterprises, a nearby wholesale plant grower.

"I convinced Green Leaf to let me water plants and unload trucks for \$2.25

an hour," Hendricks recalls. While it may have begun as "just another job," he quickly became engrossed in the work. His interest and intuitive skill as a propagator caught the attention of Oliver "Buzz" Babikow, the company's president, who gave the novice horticulturist increasing responsibility. Within two years, Hendricks was in charge of growing a number of the tropical plants the company sold during the 1970s house-

A vast hoop greenhouse full of the fern, *Onoclea sensibilis*, and many other natives.

plant boom. And as perennials became more popular in the 1980s, Green Leaf moved Hendricks into that line of production. He supervised a range of perennial greenhouses in Kennett Square, PA, and, to learn more about this new field, took classes taught by Dr. Darrel Apps at Longwood Gardens.

"I would badger Dr. Apps with a lot of questions," Hendricks recalled. "I eventually convinced him to come out to our greenhouses and look around." Apps then recommended different varieties for Green Leaf to grow and even provided stock plants. He also introduced his eager student to buyers and growers in the industry, relationships Hendricks maintained after leaving Green Leaf and setting up shop with Castorani in 1988.

By that time, with a wife and two children and 13 years at Green Leaf under his belt, Hendricks was looking to forge his own path in horticulture, but had yet to find a niche. The turning point came when, by chance, he saw a small article in the local Kennett newspaper about a Philadelphia landscape-restoration firm, Andropogon Associates, and the beautiful native bluestem grass from which the company took its name.

"I was growing ornamental grasses as a side project," Hendricks recalls. "Once I saw the article, I called up Andropogon Associates and invited them out to see what I was doing. They were unbelievably excited when I offered to grow *Andropogon* for them, and before long, I was getting orders for grasses that Green Leaf wasn't interested in. I took this as a bit of a sign from God that there really was a market out there for native plants."

Besides Apps, Hendricks soon met several other "high priests" of horticulture, as he calls them, including a Maryland grower named Richard Simon, Dr. Richard Lighty (then director of the Mt. Cuba Center for the Study

of Piedmont Flora in Centreville, Delaware), and Pierre Bennerup of Sunny Border Nurseries in Connecticut. Hendricks was the first grower to offer several of Lighty's most popular native-plant selections, including *Aster novibelgii* 'Purple Dome' and *Solidago sphacelata* 'Golden Fleece'. "Bennerup walked me through his nursery, gave me armloads of plants, and said, 'Grow me a thousand of this, grow me a thousand of that,' Hendricks says with a smile. "With friends like these, it wasn't terribly hard to sell all the plants we could grow in those early days."

And unlike some, Hendricks never fails in his catalog to give credit where it's due. "A lot of growers pretend everything new that they grow is their own introduction," he says. "I've always tried to share the spotlight with those kind enough to get me new plants." He is especially grateful for the partnership of Castorani, who provides the business expertise that has allowed the nursery to expand many times over the years.

As he enters his second dozen years at North Creek, Hendricks' goal is now to find new ways to "green" the business of making plants at his own nursery and others. He does this by recycling more of the plastic he uses, making greenhouses more fuel efficient, and reducing the use of chemical pesticides. "Consumers in Europe are already demanding environmentally friendly products," Hendricks says, noting that it's only a matter of time before the movement spreads to the U.S. "Hopefully," he adds, "before long, the Andropogon Associates of the world will not only want native plants, but want them grown in the greenest manner possible."

Today, North Creek produces several million small plugs every year, employing about 40 full and part-time workers in 30 greenhouses and several open fields



covering a total of about five acres. But, as big as this operation may seem to the home gardener, the nursery is small by wholesale-industry standards. Hendricks has to work hard to keep ahead of the big guys who can produce far more plants far more cheaply. He finds new plants by scouring wild areas with botanists, buying them from specialty retail nurseries, and trading with growers in Europe



(where gardeners have appreciated our stateside natives far longer than most Americans). He also helps out PHS's Philadelphia Green program, providing plants and technical assistance for projects at the Airport, 26th Street gateway, and Eastern State Penitentiary.

North Creek has a trial garden, where these new varieties are tested before being offered in the catalog, but

Hendricks asked me not to photograph these new, unreleased plants, or even describe them in this article. To do so, he said—quoting another of his many unofficial teachers, plantswoman Stephanie Cohen—would be to promulgate “plant pornography.” He elaborates, “That’s when a garden magazine publishes sexy pictures of plants that people can’t get their hands on.”

All I can tell you is that some of North Creek’s trial plants I recently saw are fantastic, and we should be able to get our hands on them soon, thanks to Dale Hendricks. 📷

Adam Levine is a regular contributor to *Green Scene*. He recently won an award from the Garden Writer's Association for his writing.

A Christmas

Creating Your Own Holiday Craft

Story by Janet Carter

Photography by Harry Kalish

What is a Christmas feast without a charming centerpiece set as the table's focal point? Festooned with greens, ribbons, ornaments and, of course, a candle in the middle, a well-made centerpiece can capture the essence of holiday cheer. Let's follow these simple steps to create your own version of this Yuletide favorite.



Centerpiece



1 Here are all of the mechanics (or design elements) you'll need to create a centerpiece. Among the necessary items are a design bowl, candle, ribbons, greens, a good pair of pruners, scissors, wire, wire cutters, and a block of Oasis (a foam-like medium used to hold flower arrangements together; it is available at most nurseries and florist shops).

For the greens, I suggest you get three different kinds of greens, which will create a more natural look. Branches from Douglas fir, white pine, holly, and juniper are often good choices. Greens can be purchased at a nursery, or you can cut them from your yard or a neighbor's (with permission, of course). Also, think about where you're going to place the centerpiece. Is it going to have a round shape for the center of a table, or will it be long and narrow for a fireplace mantle? If the latter, cut longer pieces of branches for the sides of your bowl.



2 Prepare the design bowl by cutting the Oasis block to fit snugly inside. It's easiest to use a piece of wire to cut the Oasis. (There are cutting grooves in the Oasis which the wire fits right into, making the task much easier. You can get three pieces out of the one block and each section will fit into a standardized bowl size.)

Put the Oasis in a bucket of room-temperature water and let it soak the water up naturally. Then place the Oasis—drainage holes down—into the bowl. Now you're ready to begin building your centerpiece.



3 Place the candle in the center of the Oasis block. Firmly press the candle down about an inch or more—enough so that it will stand up on its own.

A Christmas Centerpiece



4 Start cutting the greens for the sides of the arrangement. Here, I'm starting with juniper, but you can use any kind of evergreen you'd like. Strip the needles off the lower parts of each stem before inserting into the Oasis. (Also, don't cut the tips off the stems—you want to leave the tips on for a natural look.)

5 Start inserting your cut pieces into the Oasis, making a skirt around the rim of the bowl. Build upwards so that you cover the sides of the block entirely.





6 When you get to the flat top of the Oasis, start to mix and match greens, covering all of your mechanics—in this case, the bowl and Oasis. After I cover the sides with juniper, I fill the top in with white pine twigs. Again, a variety of greens will give the centerpiece a more dynamic look. One type of greenery will look static and fake, while using different kinds creates the appearance you see in nature, with trees and shrubs randomly mixed together.



7 Begin decorating with ribbon, pinecones, or whatever ornaments you choose. You can also use fresh flowers, Christmas bulbs, fake holly berries, and more—use your imagination! And for holiday fragrance, try a few sprigs of eucalyptus. To attach, either wrap a little piece of wire around the decorative ornament and stick the other end in the Oasis to secure it, or buy a “floral pick,” a small piece of wood that has a wire on the end for securing objects.



A Christmas Centerpiece

8 Check to see that all the Oasis is completely covered and, if necessary, add final greens to achieve the shape and size you want. If you plan to light the candle, don't build the greens up too high—doing so might be a fire hazard. Water weekly in a cool room; more often in warmer rooms.

The only step left is to put your centerpiece on the dining room table, surround with friends and food, and then have a wonderful holiday feast. Now that wasn't hard, was it? 🍷

Aside from being one of our "Christmas workshop experts," Janet Carter is outreach coordinator for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green program.

Philadelphia Green gets into the Christmas Spirit

Each December, PHS's Philadelphia Green program sponsors several Christmas workshops to encourage community-garden groups to spread holiday cheer. Three people from each group attend one of the workshops in order to learn how to create

festive wreaths, centerpieces, and door swags. These trainees can also purchase supplies and then return to their local groups to teach them how to create these projects. And with members of 50 gardening groups attending the workshops, the number of people who eventually get trained is substantial.

Notes Philadelphia Green's Janet Carter, "These Christmas workshops are an important connection to the community during the non-gardening season. They help us fulfill the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's mission to help create a sense of community through horticulture. Besides that, they're a lot of fun!"



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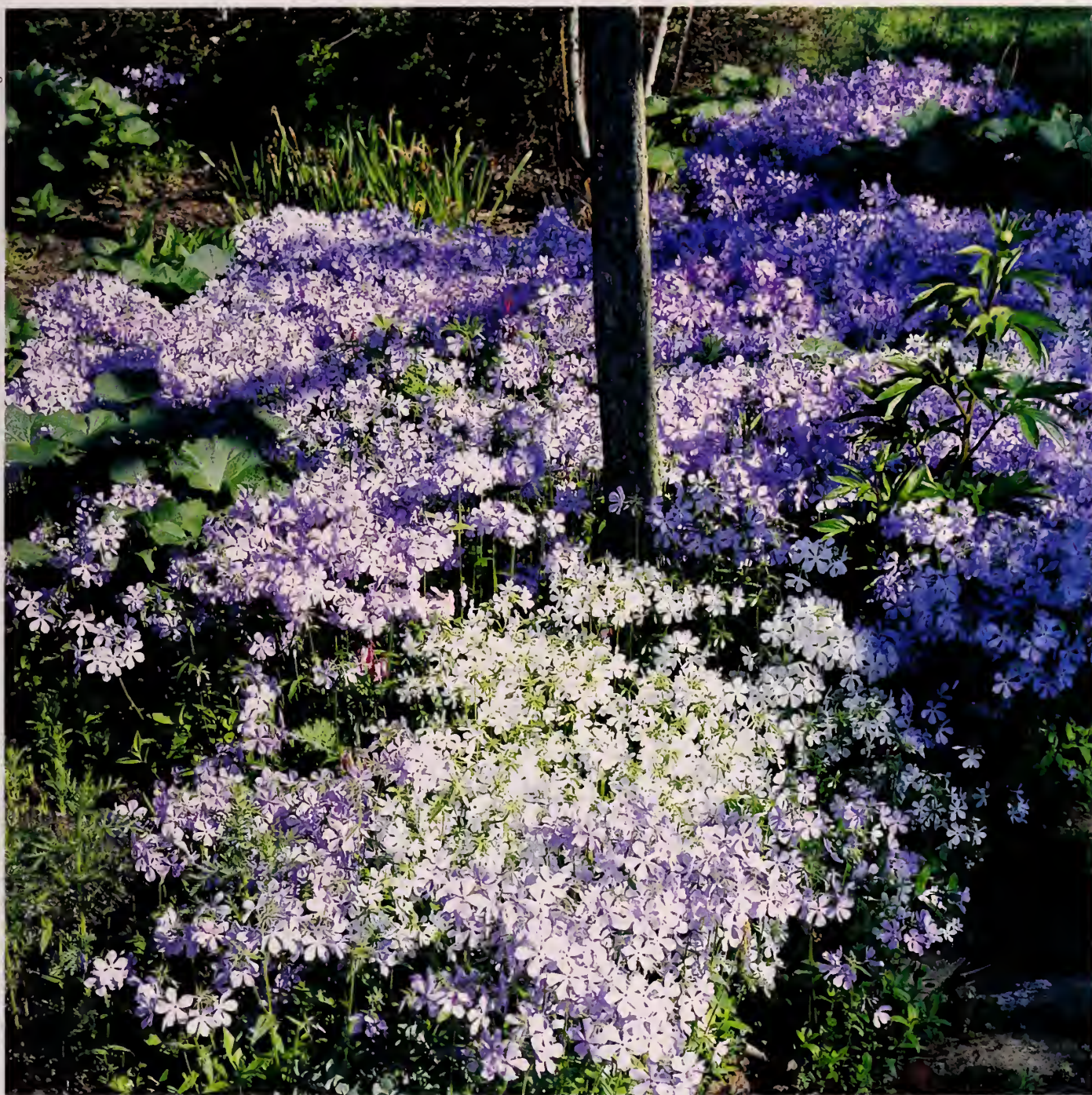


WONDERFUL WEEDS

7 Woodland Treasures For Every Garden

Story by Toni Brinton

Yes, there are some wonderful weeds—several plants that are derisively labeled as “nothing but weeds” are actually beautiful, garden-worthy specimens. They might not be for every gardener, but for those in the know, they can add a wild, native touch to your plantings.

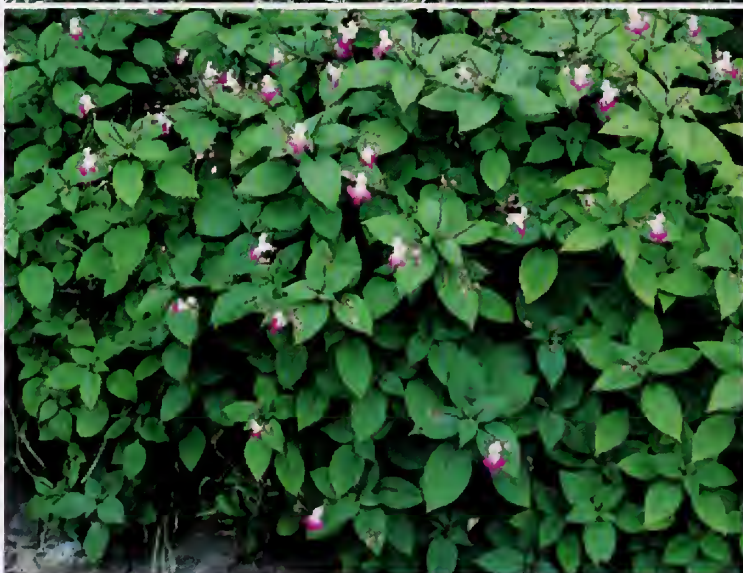


Blue phlox

My favorite weed is the spring-flowering **blue phlox** (*Phlox divaricata*). It was one of the first wildflowers I learned and planted. Many years later, I still think it's a gorgeous plant. A solid 100 feet of this "weed" cascades down the side of my driveway underpinning the soft whites, pinks, and apricots of native deciduous azaleas. It also has scattered itself all over my south-facing forest hillside. I do occasionally weed it out of places where

it might overrun a more fragile plant. But it is easily removed from unwanted places because its roots are shallow. To my mind, you can never have too much *Phlox divaricata*.

From late summer into fall, the native **cardinal flower** (*Lobelia cardinalis* and *L. siphilitica*) send their tall bright spires of red and blue skyward. The nearer to water and damp soils they are, the taller they rise. But amazingly, cardinal flowers



Clockwise from top left: Woodland poppy, *Corydalis lutea*, Labrador violet, policeman's helmet and ostrich fern.

have grown and prospered for me in an extremely sunny south-facing stable-yard—in poor, gravelly soil, no less. In both growing situations, they self sow in such great quantities that I weed them away from their less aggressive plant mates.

Next in my list of praiseworthy weeds are two yellows: the **woodland poppy** (*Stylophorum diphyllum*) and *Corydalis lutea* (no common name). In mid-spring, the poppy, with its bright yellow cups, edges the woodland path leading from the top of our hill to our front door, underpinning daffodils and early-flowering azaleas. I remove several each year so they do not overrun my winter blooming treasures, the Christmas and Lenten roses (*Helleborus niger* and *H. orientalis*). One caution: this poppy has

yellow juice that will stain your clothes and any exposed arm or leg, so wear your oldest clothes when doing this gardening job.

The other yellow in my duo is a small, dainty-looking treasure that self sows with gay abandon, and provides a continuous small bloom of bright yellow. Six-to-eight inches tall with delicate cut foliage, *Corydalis lutea* scatters itself everywhere but is so barely attached to the earth that you can whisk it away from wherever you don't want it. *C. lutea* is also very tough compared to the fancy, new oriental-blue *Corydalis* that transpires in the muggy Philadelphia summers.

Another durable and good-looking "weed" is the **ostrich fern** (*Matteuccia pennsylvanica* syn. *M. struthiopteris*), whose brown fertile frond keeps compa-

ny all winter with the seed pods of *Rudbeckia*. In spring, bright green edible croziers emerge and then, all summer long, their tall green fronds withstand sun, humidity and storms aplenty without showing any signs of stress. Ostrich ferns send out long white underground runners and zoom across the soft forest floor, but if they become too intrusive, I'll pull them up where they are not wanted. They can simply be mowed or sheared, too. Still, like *Corydalis lutea*, it makes a great groundcover under large and small trees and shrubs.

Dainty violets, too, can be very weedy, throwing their seed far distances. They fasten their corm-like roots to the soil, requiring a stout hoe for their removal. My favorite—and the least aggressive—is the very tiny **Labrador violet** (*Viola*

SOURCES (IN SEASON)

Meadowbrook Farm

1633 Washington Lane
Meadowbrook, PA 19046
(215) 887-5900

[Labrador violet, *Corydalis lutea*,
woodland poppy, cardinal flower,
blue phlox, ostrich fern]

Mostardi Nursery

4033 West Chester Pike
Newtown Square, PA 19073
(610) 356-8035
www.mostardi.com

[Labrador violet, *Corydalis lutea*,
woodland poppy, cardinal flower,
blue phlox, ostrich fern]

Primex

435 W. Glenside Ave.
Glenside, PA 19038
(215) 887-7500

[Labrador violet, *Corydalis lutea*,
cardinal flower, blue phlox,
ostrich fern]

Primrose Path

921 Scottdale-Dawson Rd.
Scottdale, PA 15683
www.theprimrosepath.com
[woodland poppy, blue phlox]

Roslyn Nursery

211 Burrs Lane
Dix Lane, NY 11746
(631) 643-9347
www.roslynnursery.com
[woodland poppy, blue phlox,
ostrich fern, *Corydalis lutea*,
cardinal flower]

J. Franklin Styer

914 Baltimore Pike
Concordville, PA 19331
(610) 459-2400

www.styers.com

[Labrador violet, *Corydalis lutea*,
cardinal flower, blue phlox,
ostrich fern, policeman's helmet]

Thompson & Morgan Seed

P.O. Box 1308
Jackson, NJ 08527
(800) 274-7333
www.thompson-morgan.com
[cardinal flower, Labrador violet]

labradorica), which has dark purple leaves and very dark purple flowers. The Confederate violet (*Viola soraria* 'Priceana'), with its small, beardless light-purple flowers, is also a tough companion to the spring beauties in our stream-side meadow. Both of these violets are spring ephemerals, disappearing into the meadow grass as the summer progresses (so they should never really be called "weeds").

Most of the above weed treasures are native plants, not introduced from foreign lands. Yet there is one foreigner that self sows for me, the annual **policeman's helmet** or Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera* syn. *I. roylei*), which is of European origin. Its pink and purple tubular flowers blend and mingle with the fall-flowering oriental anemones, chrysanthemums, and asters, and is a tall, airy cousin of our native impatiens (touch-me-nots or jewelweed), which have yellow or orange flowers. I don't remember how I came by the original plant, yet I would not be without it. For the record, *Impatiens glandulifera* is considered invasive in moister parts of the world (the Pacific Northwest, for example), but I have not had a problem with this stately specimen in my garden.

Most of the wonderful weeds above should be considered assets in any but the most controlled garden. After 36 years of gardening (I didn't start until my late 30s), these are the plants I would not be without. Rarer, scarcer, and more difficult plants do have their virtues, but for visual impact, these sturdy, reliable, and mostly native plants cannot be beat. So let a few of the wonderful weeds through your garden gate and then enjoy the show. 🌱

A long-time *Green Scene* contributor, Toni Brinton is a past member of the PHS Council and chair of the Library committee, as well as chair of Passing and the Horticult at the Philadelphia Flower Show. In addition, she served for six years as president of Historic Bartram's Garden.

Flora Graphics



PURSLANE: THE INCREDIBLE, EDIBLE WEED

by Ronny F. Kosempel

It's prolific, it's tasty, it's nutritious...and it's free. What is this miracle plant? None other than that pernicious, pesky, and prolific weed: purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*). As you yanked those green and succulent stems from the vegetable patch, I'm sure your mind wasn't on purslane's high Vitamin C content. Yet this "weed" is entirely edible and indeed a good source of vitamins.

With all of this to recommend it, I decided to give it a try. The plant itself is very easy to identify, so there is no mistaking it for something less edible. I chose the tender top leaves and picked a cup full, washed them, patted them dry, and sprinkled them in the evening salad bowl. No one complained (this is a feat in itself for my finicky family). It has a pleasant crunch and mildly acidic taste. This and the fact that it is absolutely free for the taking, high in nutrients, and low in calorie content inspired me to continue my research into this incredible weed.

I then spoke with Jeannine Vannais, head herbalist for Pennsbury Manor. She explained how the early settlers depended on what they grew in their gardens and also what grew wild in the surroundings to survive. Back in England, they would have had access to these wild edibles for a longer period of time because of the mild winters there. During the winter here, fresh food was scarce so pickling the raw purslane stems was common. And in the early spring, fresh greens were a blessing and a necessity to vitamin-starved colonists. In the kitchen at Pennsbury, they make pickled-purslane stems based on a recipe from William Penn's time.

Since my family is not really big on pickled-purslane stems, I needed to research other easier recipes in which to try this abundant harvest. Since the salad had passed muster, I decided to forge onward and try some other recipes, though not all at once. As the season progressed, I graduated to soups. Start with adding a small quantity to your soup or stew recipe, until you feel more confident. My family grew used to seeing me in the vegetable garden and has generously adopted the attitude "don't ask, don't tell" when they are not quite sure what those green things floating in the soup are.

If we can do it, so can you. Invite some adventurous gardening friends over for a "weed lunch." Trade recipes with other weed aficionados. Arm yourself with a good wild plant guide and try some of these "garden invaders." They are tasty, nutritious...and did I mention that they are free?

EUCELL GIBBONS' FRIED PURSLANE

Cut several pieces of bacon into small pieces and fry them in a large skillet. When they are cooked to the desired crispness, dump in about a quart of purslane tips. Stir until the tips are evenly coated with bacon drippings, then cover and let cook for 6-7 minutes. Season with salt, if desired, and a little vinegar.

PURSLANE CASSEROLE

Gather enough tips to fill a pot. Wash well. Boil the tips for about 10 minutes. Drain. Chop fine. Stir in one beaten egg and as many bread crumbs as needed. Add salt and pepper to taste. Bake until the top is lightly browned. (Also, try adding some grated cheese and garlic if this appeals to you.)

Ronny Kosempel is the former President of the Old York Road Garden Club.



1999-2000 Green Scene Index

Sept. 1999 to Dec. 2000 (Volume 28)

Arums

(Passionate Perennialist column)

by Beverly Fitts, Dec. 2000, p. 32

American Trees (essay)

by Gayle B. Samuels, Nov. 1999, p. 22

Arranging the Harvest

by Eva Monheim, Oct. 2000, p. 18

Berry Combinations

(Passionate Perennialist column)

by Beverly Fitts, Oct. 2000, p. 34

Bruno, Barbara

By Lorraine Kiefer, August 2000, p. 28

Bulbs (bulb-garden pots)

by Art Wolk, Nov. 1999, p. 6

Bulbs (design ideas)

by Becky Heath, Sept. 1999, p. 20

Bulbs (layering techniques)

by Art Wolk, Sept. 1999, p. 14

Bulb-Planting Tools

(Tool Tales column)

by Adam Levine, Oct. 2000, p. 36

Carnivorous Plants (garden art)

by Steve Maurer, Nov. 1999, p. 4

Chanticleer (Chris Woods interview)

by Fran Sorin, Nov. 1999, p. 10

Christmas Wreath Project

by Sally McCabe, Nov. 1999, p. 27

Christmas Centerpiece Project

by Janet Carter, Dec. 2000, p. 20

Daylilies

by Dorothy Noble, May 2000, p. 16

Daylilies (book review)

by Pete Prown, May 2000, p. 20

Drought Plants (plant profile)

by Patricia Taylor, May 2000, p. 40

Faeries in the Garden

by Victoria Lashley, Sept. 1999, p. 8

Flower Arranging (basics)

by Jane Godshalk, July 2000, p. 6

Flower Arranging (cutting garden)

by Lorraine Kiefer, July 2000, p. 30

Flower Arranging (Flower Show)

by Anne Vallery, July 2000, p. 10

Flower Arranging (Ikebana)

by Pamela Vu, July 2000, p. 14

Flower Arranging

(National Cathedral)

by Marban Sparkman, July 2000, p. 36

Flower Arranging (supplies)

by Cheryl Monroe, July 2000, p. 20

Flower Arranging (winter techniques)

by Joanna Reed, July 2000, p. 24

Forsythia

(Philadelphia Green pruning tip)

by Pete Prown, March 2000, p. 7

Garden Ornaments

by Beverly Fitts, August 2000, p. 16

Garden Redesign (driveway garden)

by Walter Chandoha, May 2000, p. 32

Garden Redesign (Southwest style)

by Kirk R. Brown, Sept. 1999, p. 4

Genetic Engineering (special report)

by Pamela Vu, Sept. 1999, p. 26

Gillenia (plant profile)

by Debbie Moran, March 2000, p. 6

Gold Medal Plant Awards

(plant profile)

by Richard L. Bitner, Nov. 1999, p. 30

Gold Medal Plant Awards

(plant profile)

by Sheila Gmeiner, Oct. 2000, p. 22

Golden Ragwort

(Uncommon Groundcovers column)

by Patricia A. Taylor, Oct. 2000, p. 37

Hellebores (plant profile)

by Pete Prown, Jan. 2000, p. 6

Hendricks, Dale (profile)

By Adam Levine, Dec. 2000, p. 16

Herbs (Growing in Winter)

by Walter Chandoha, Dec. 2000, p. 8

Invasive Plants (special report)

by Adam Levine, May 2000, p. 22

Invasive Plants (controlled burning)

by Jody Peterson, May 2000, p. 25

1999-2000 Green Scene Index

Jock Christie (gardening tips)
by Fran Sorin, Jan. 2000, p. 18

**Letter from the Editor:
The Grand Finale**
by Pete Prown, Sept. 1999, p. 3

**Letter from the Editor:
The Winter Gardener**
by Pete Prown, Jan. 2000, p. 5

**Letter from the Editor:
March—A Season of Beginnings**
by Pete Prown, March 2000, p. 5

**Letter from the Editor:
Our American Style**
by Pete Prown, Nov. 1999, p. 3

**Letter from the Editor:
Teach the Children**
by Pete Prown, May 2000, p. 5

**Letter from the Editor:
The Arranger's Eye**
by Pete Prown, July 2000, p. 5

**Letter from the Editor:
Zinnias...or Bust**
by Pete Prown, August 2000, p. 5

**Letter from the Editor:
Tools of the Trade**
by Pete Prown, Oct. 2000, p. 5

**Longwood's Search for a Hardy
Camellia**
by R. William Thomas, Oct. 2000, p. 17

Mattock (Tool Tales column)
by Adam Levine, Dec. 2000, p. 36

Medieval Garden (design)
by Pamela Jacobsen, Jan. 2000, p. 10

Monkshood
By Pete Prown, Dec. 2000, p. 3

**Native Plants (7 Charming Natives for
the Mid-Atlantic Garden)**
by Dorothy Wright and Bill Lamack,
August 2000, p. 34

**New Plants:
2000 Introductions (plant profile)**
by Dorothy Noble, Jan. 2000, p. 24

**New Plants:
Unusual Varieties (plant profile)**
by Pamela Jacobsen, March 2000, p. 34

**Northern Lights: Gardening with
Camillias
in Cold Climates**
By Scott D. Appell, Oct. 2000, p. 12

Old Seed (Burpee)
by Colby Wolfe, May 2000, p. 6

Perfect Amaryllis, The
by Ray Rogers, Oct. 2000, p. 40

**Philadelphia Flower Show
(Central Feature)**
by Adam Levine, March 2000, p. 10

Philadelphia Flower Show (history)
by Wilbur Zimmerman, March 2000, p. 24

**Philadelphia Flower Show
(horticultural tips)**
by Judith C. McKeon, March 2000, p. 16

Philadelphia Green
[see *Vacant Land* and *Forsythia*]

Philadelphia Harvest Show
by John Gannon, August 2000, p. 40





Plant a Row for the Hungry
March 2000, p. 7

Resourceful Gardener, The
by Lauri A. Brunton, Nov. 1999, p. 23

Reynold, Renny: The Life and Work of a Philadelphia Flower Show Favorite
by Patricia McLaughlin,
August 2000, p. 10

Rock Gardening (Watnong)
by Ruby Weinberg, Sept. 1999, p. 30

Room with a View (indoor design)
by Claire Sawyers, Jan. 2000, p. 30

Roses (easy roses)
by Patricia Taylor, May 2000, p. 26

Roses (Knock-Out rose)
Nov. 1999, p. 5

Stanley, James (city gardener)
By Pamela Vu, Oct. 2000, p. 7

Swiss Chard
by Debbie Moran, August 2000, p. 7

Thyrum, Eve (profile)
By Dorothy Wright, Dec. 2000, p. 38

Toronto, Canada
(Cabbagetown gardens)
by Pete Prown, Jan. 2000, p. 8

Tree Farms
by Pamela Vu, Oct. 2000, p. 29

Tulipa tarda
By Debbie Moran, Oct. 2000, p. 6

Vacant Land (Philadelphia Green)
by Pamela Vu, March 2000, p. 28

Variegated Plants (essay)
by Stephanie Cohen, Jan. 2000, p. 7

Village that Lily Built, The
by Pamela Vu, August 2000, p. 6

Vines, Annual (plant profile)
by Nancy J. Ondra, May 2000, p. 10

Waldsteinia fragarioides
(Uncommon Groundcovers column)
by Patricia A. Taylor, Oct. 2000, p. 37

Washington's Crossing
(Colonial gardening)
by Bridget Salantri, Nov. 1999, p. 18

Water Facts
March 2000, p. 7

Watersheds (special report)
by Adam Levine, Nov. 1999, p. 14

Weeds, Ornamental
By Toni Brinton, Dec. 2000, p. 26

Yellow In The Landscape: A Tale of Three Sunny Plant Introductions
by Dr. Tomasz Anisko,
August 2000, p. 22

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Pete Prown, Editor



The PASSIONATE PERENNIALIST

BY BEVERLY FITTS

Fascinating Arums

Looking through a book on perennials, the arums jumped right off the page and into my imagination. One photo showed boldly variegated foliage and another showed bright red berries that would make colorful additions to a shady garden. Fascinated with the appearance of these attractive plants, my quest began.

I found my first arum (*Arum italicum* ssp. *italicum* 'Marmoratum') the next spring at a small nursery in upstate New York, and lovingly planted my new treasure in the shade of tall trees. In July, it died. This happens more often than I care to remember. So, imagine my surprise when I witnessed its resurrection the following fall. Determined to find out what was going on, and how to grow this curious plant successfully, I tracked down Peter Boyce's book, *The Genus Arum* (quite a feat in pre-Internet days). Now, you can get this definitive Kew monograph from Amazon.com.

From Boyce, I learned that the growth cycle of arums actually begins in the fall. Evergreen leaves emerge in early fall and last through ice and snow (yes, they're great for winter flower arrangements). The plant looks a bit tired after a hard winter, but never mind, as new foliage appears again in spring.

The flower of the Italian arum struts its stuff in late May or early June. Like Jack-in-the-pulpit and other members of the aroid family, it has a spathe (the pulpit) and a spadix (the jack). The pale, chartreuse flower reminds me somewhat of a calla lily and would be just as beautiful in bouquets and arrangements if, that is, it didn't stink.

The odor—caused by an increase in the spadix's temperature at flowering time—varies according to the species and its geographical location. This clever trick attracts the appropriate pollinator. Some years the smell reminds me of a dirty subway

station; other years it's hardly noticeable. Since the spathe and odor last less than a week, I never know whether to lament the loss of an unusually elegant flower or celebrate the improved air quality.

By August, the foliage disappears, leaving only the naked and thickened stalk supporting clusters of brilliant, red-orange berries. I like to hide the bare stems with the foliage of the stinking hellebore (*Helleborus foetidus*), variegated ivies, or small ferns and hostas. After berrying, the plant goes dormant, which is the best time to transplant if you must. By early fall new foliage emerges once again.

Although arums are slow to establish, they're remarkably easy to grow. Just give the tubers rich, well-drained soil, moist springs and dry summers. They prefer light shade in the Philadelphia area, but I've been growing mine successfully in the full shade of mature trees for many years. The clump has been holding its own, but not increasing.

While some lists of invasive plants include arums, Boyce mentions only *Arum maculatum* as invasive. This is the common Lords and Ladies found throughout England and Europe. His detailed

habitat maps show a much more limited scope for the Italian arum, and even more limited habitats for the remaining 23 species. This year, only three seedlings of the Italian arum appeared in my garden, the first in 10 years.

Arums are all-round great plants for the shade. They offer attractive, evergreen foliage from October to July, elegant flowers in early summer, and stunning berries in August. Searching for cultivars of *A. italicum* like 'Green Marble', 'Tiny', and 'White Winter' can keep even the most avid collector busy. Begin your own quest to acquire these fascinating plants at Russell Gardens Wholesale, Richboro, PA (215-322-4799) or at Seneca Hills Perennials, Oswego, NY. (www.senecahill.com).



Beverly Fitts

Beverly Fitts is a busy garden lecturer, photographer, and former president of the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group.

UNCOMMON GROUNDCOVERS



BY PATRICIA A. TAYLOR

Golden Ragwort

Sometimes a plant has everything going for it except its name—golden ragwort certainly fits into this category. To me, its popular name conjures up a vision of a messy weed. And then there's its oft-debated botanical name. Botanists are currently in a tug-of-war over it, so while most literature and mail-order catalogs list it as *Senecio aureus*, the new USDA plant database (<http://plants.usda.gov>) cites it as *Packera aurea*.

So forget the nomenclature and just trust me, dear reader. This superb evergreen is a native groundcover, found growing on its own in sunny-to-partially shaded moist areas throughout the eastern half of North America (Zones 4-8). Once regarded as sacred by the Iroquois and Cherokee Indians, it is still used as a medicinal plant by herbalists. Since it is reputedly poisonous to wildlife (hence its resistance to chewing insects and animals), it is only brewed as a tea using its dried leaves.

Right now, golden ragwort's dark green leaves are a standout in my bare winter landscape. They are somewhat heart-shaped, with the widest part measuring 5-1/2 inches and the deepest 4 inches. They tend to hunker down a bit with winter cold and reach no more than 8 or 9 inches in height. (In summer, an occasionally exuberant leaf will soar up to 12 inches.)

Golden ragwort expands slowly but relentlessly through underground stolons. This kind of spread results in a dense covering—one that admits little or no weeds. Deep snow and winter cold thin out its ranks, albeit briefly. With the arrival of spring warmth and sunshine, purple-flushed new leaves appear wherever they can squeeze their way through, as well as all along the outer edges of the expanding patch. Purple also suffuses the emerging stems and buds, which together top out at 2 feet.

In early May, charming aster-like flowers of gold—about 1

inch in diameter—open for three to four weeks. The flowers metamorphose into rounded white seed heads, which look like fluffy buttons as they bob above the dark green foliage. (Honesty compels me to admit that things get a bit messy at this point. You can either let nature take its course, which it

does in about two or three weeks when stalks and flowers shrivel and disappear. Or you can easily and quickly yank out withering stalks and compost them.)

Though it is said to prefer moist sites—because it is naturally found in such situations—my plants came through last year's drought with only a weekly watering. I suspect this is because they are in a partially shaded location. Should you want to place yours in full sun, you should consider the availability of moisture. And that will be your only worry, because this plant is literally carefree. My golden ragwort underskirts *Nandina* shrubs, but I also think it would be perfect when paired with vigorous, sun tolerant hostas, such as 'Sum and Substance' and 'Royal Standard'. The chartreuse foliage of the former, in particular, would create a stunning combination with golden ragwort's rich dark-green leaves.

Though widely grown in American gardens at the beginning of the last century, golden ragwort is rarely found today. This is a great garden mystery to me. Perhaps the novelty of the now-ubiquitous Japanese pachysandra displaced golden ragwort from garden and lawn areas, but I feel it's time to reverse the situation. It's a clear winner. ☐



Patricia A. Taylor

SOURCES

Crownsville Nursery, P.O. Box 797, Crownsville, MD 21032
(410) 849-3143, www.crownsvillenursery.com

Forestfarm, 990 Tetherow Road, Williams, OR 97544, (541) 846-7269, www.forestfarm.com

Patricia A. Taylor describes many more evergreen groundcovers in her book, *Easy Care Native Plants* (Holt).



TOOL TALES

BY ADAM LEVINE

Mastering the Mattock

About 10 years ago, I inherited a number of gardening tools, among which was a well-worn mattock. I know now that this double-headed tool—with a flat, hoe-like blade on one side and an axe blade on the other—is indispensable for any number of difficult digging and grubbing tasks. But back then, I had no idea how to use a mattock, and it would have sat forever gathering rust if my friend Mac hadn't called one day in search of it.


Mac needed to install a plastic barrier along the edge of his bamboo patch to keep it from escaping into the neighbor's yard. He knew a mattock would be perfect for the job, but since he was nearly 70 and in ill health, I was "hired" as his mattock-wielder. Following Mac's basic instructions, I quickly got a feel for the tool—its versatility, strength, and efficiency amazed me. Swinging it like a pick, I could move a surprising amount of soil with the digging blade; and, when encountering the tenacious bamboo rhizomes, found it easy to slice through them with the axe head. Shifting quickly from digging to cutting and back again, I dug a narrow 50-foot trench through the tangle of bamboo in far less time, and with far less frustration, than if I had used the shovel and loppers that would have been my tools of choice for this job.

These days, the more I use a mattock, the more jobs I find for it. Besides Mac's bamboo, I've used it to grub out unwanted patches of ivy, pachysandra, and sod, as well as many tree stumps. It's great for turning over new ground laced with surface tree roots—areas where I can barely sink a shovel blade, even if I jump on it with all my weight. When digging large holes for new trees or ponds, I'll often use a mattock to break up the soil, then resort to a shovel to remove the loosened

mass. And as Mac taught me that day in his backyard, it's a perfect tool for digging narrow trenches for irrigation lines or wires for outdoor lighting (as well as for installing ineffective barriers against bamboo that, nonetheless, might bamboozle the neighbors into thinking you have a handle on the situation. For, of course, the foot-deep plastic barrier Mac and I installed proved useless against the march of the bamboo rhizomes, which went over it, under it—even through it.)

A wide range of similar tools are on the market—the most common has a digging blade paired with a pick—but a true mattock has the axe blade, which makes it uniquely useful in the tasks I just described. I've seen short-handled mattocks, but these need to be used in the kneeling position, and are only useful for much lighter tasks. Any mattock works best when a sharp edge is kept on both blades (a file or a grinder can be used). Neither blade needs to be razor sharp, since much of the cutting power of the tool comes from its weight and the force of the swing.

Mattocks come in different weights and styles, with varying handle lengths, and are available in many local nurseries and home centers. Some are sold via mail order, but I prefer to buy my hand tools in stores. I like to hold them in my hands before I buy them: heft them, see how they fit my grip, swing them around (if I can do so without breaking anything). Unlike a power tool, a hand tool is an extension of the user's body. If I don't like the feel of it, I won't use it (or I might hurt myself if I do).

If you have a big digging job to do or, like my friend Mac, can find someone willing to do it for you, give the mattock a try. It's a powerful handtool that can make quick work of a number of different garden tasks. 



Pete Prown

Deer Damage a Problem?

HMMM...THE
SMITH'S FOR AZALEAS AND
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BACKYARD




The Science of Things

By Dorothy Wright

Eve Thyrum has an artist's eye for ornamentation and, as a retired biochemist, a scientist's penchant for order. For the past 20 years, Eve and her husband Per, also a scientist, have transformed a 2-1/4 acre former orchard in Wilmington into an archipelago of garden islands. Tucked here, there, and everywhere are some 140 sculptures and ornaments, more than 40 bird houses, and close to 20 sitting areas.

Looking among the plants also reveals the retired biochemist's scientific methods. "I have the original labels and make notes about every plant I ever bought," she reflects. "I suppose it *is* a very organized garden—maybe overly neat."

A new conservatory houses tropical plants, a potting bench, and a study with the Thyrum's horticulture library and computer. It also provides more opportunities for her experiments. "I have a lot of niches where I can push the limit on hardiness zones," Eve says. "Around the conservatory I've tucked in a lot of Zone 7 plants, such as a hardy banana, a hardy palm tree, and a pomegranate. We'll see how they overwinter."

Now the couple is planning a setting for their sundial collection and the addition of a shaded *allée* to the far pond. Clearly, it is not only the garden that has undergone a transformation. When they were researchers, Eve recalls, "We lived our lives in the lab and never had time to even think about working outdoors." Since she's been working on her own garden, however, she notes, "I've never had a second thought about going back to the lab." 

Dorothy Wright is a writer and editor who lives in Ardmore, PA.

Photos by Harry Kalish

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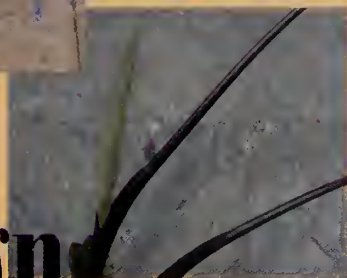
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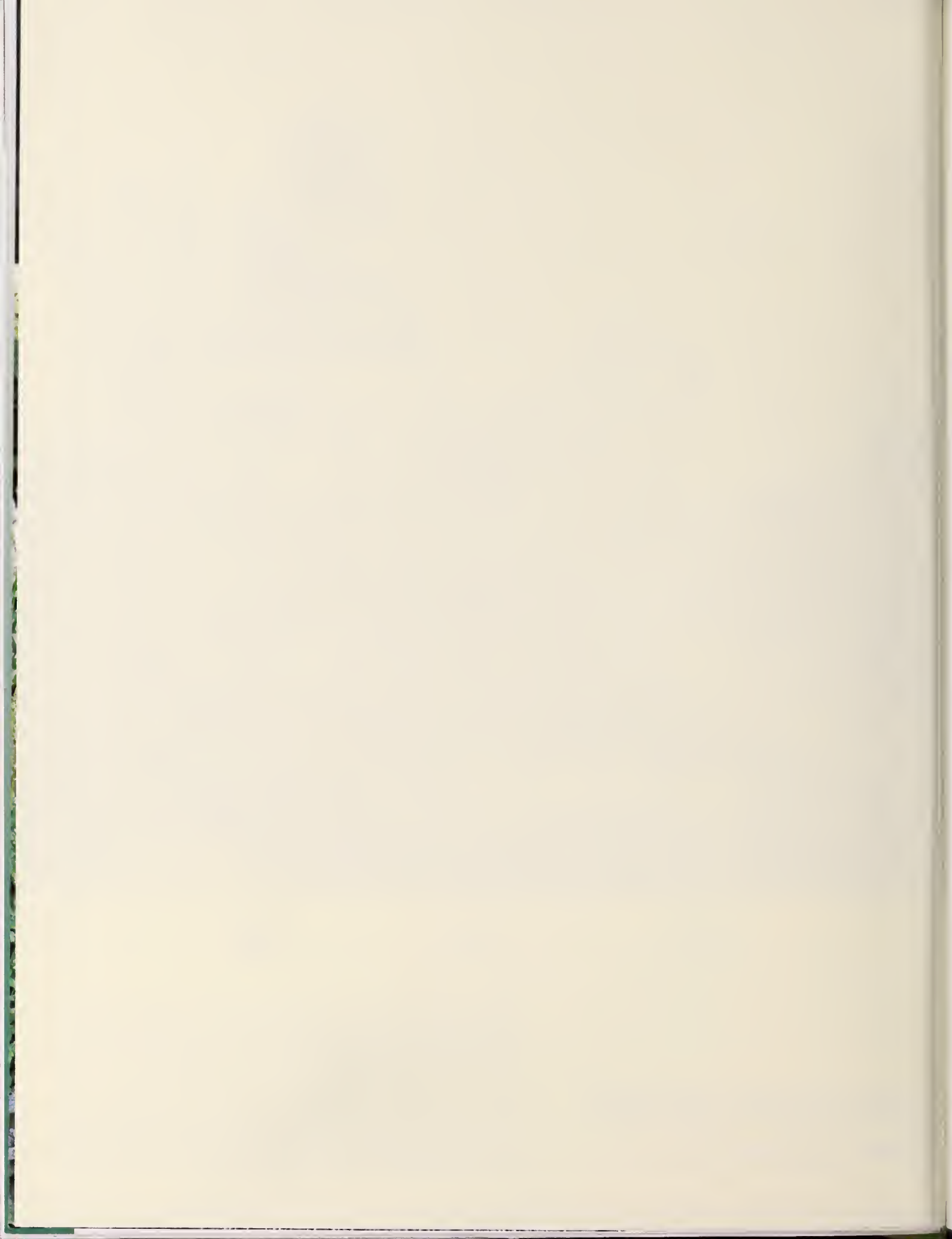
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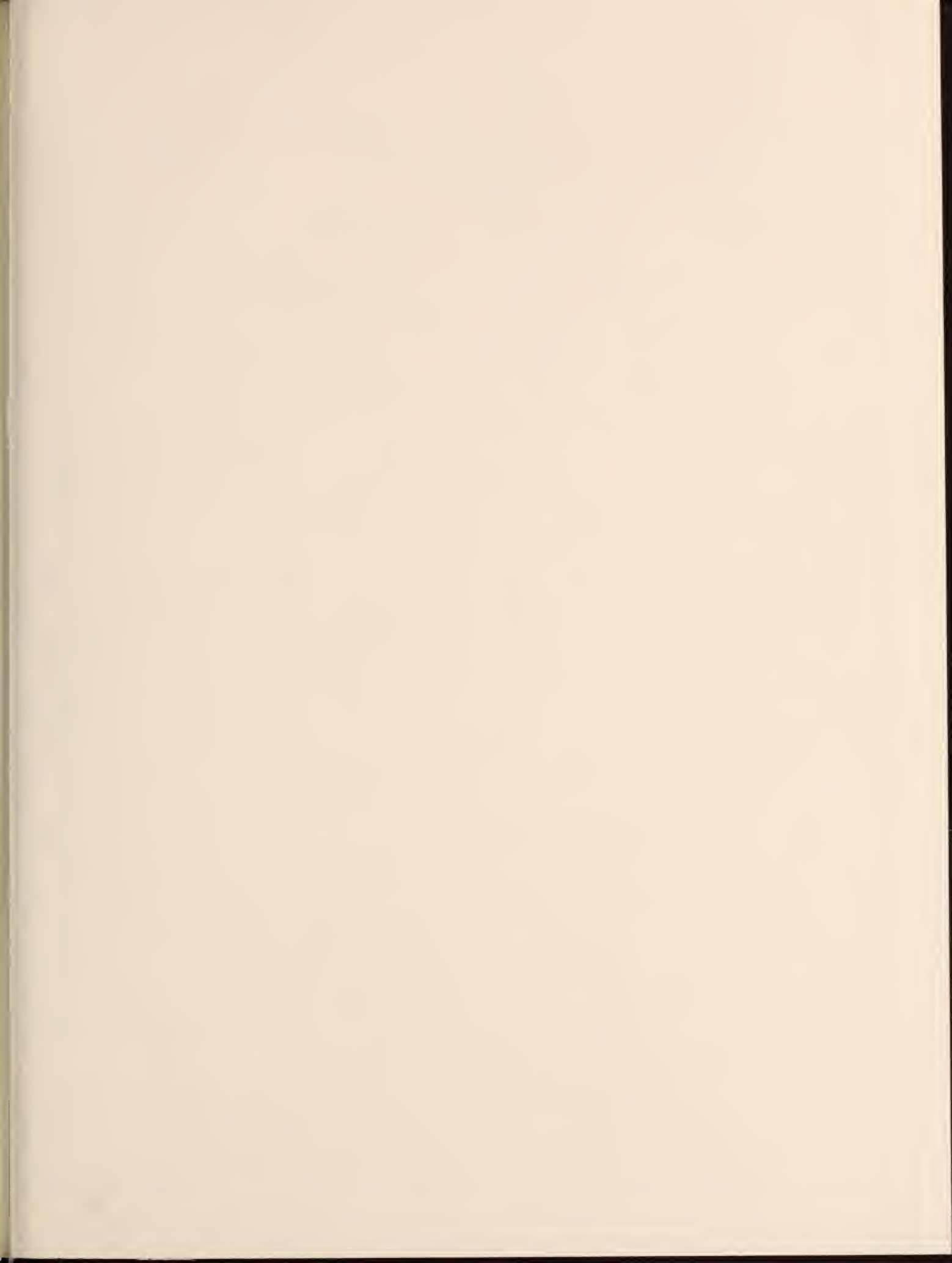
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